

2003

The discursive structures of totalitarian ideology

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The discursive structures of totalitarian ideology

by

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A dissertation submitted to the graduate faculty
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

Major: Sociology

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2003

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For the Major Program

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ABSTRACT

Realist approaches to the study of ideology have treated ideologies as static ideas that mediate between presumed social realities and political powers. In this research the researcher views ideology as discursive practice that constitutes social realities through producing its subjects. A series of formal narrative models are established to tackle the fundamental discursive structures of ideological texts. Temporal narrative analysis is used to reconstruct grand narrative in terms of causality and social categorization. Models of narrative modes, genres, and modalities are established to examine the processes of self-identity formation. Furthermore, a semantic analytical approach is devised to examine the associations among social identities, action modalization, and emotional displays and transformations.

Using the theoretical and analytical models established, the researcher conducted a case study on the Chinese communist ideology. Three types of texts (i.e. government pronouncements, personal stories, and editorials) are sampled from People's Daily. Analysis of government pronouncements shows that the Chinese communist ideological system typically opposes traditional Chinese culture as its antithesis. Different from traditional Chinese historical discourse, the communist ideology imposes a single teleological material cause on the organization of historical events. This ideological system contains two distinct sets of social categories: "we" and "they." Certain elements in the two sets are rendered ambiguous at initial stages of mass movements to provide targets. In contrast to traditional Chinese culture in which social identities change in degree, social identities in the communist ideological system change in kind.

Analysis of personal narratives shows that one's actantial role in a story is determined by one's social identity. Narrative conflicts are typically resolved through communications that are initiated by an in-group person. The ideology's typical narrative modality is the "right" modality, which is often opposed to the traditional "obligation" modality. A semantic analysis conducted on editorials shows that proposed in-group actions are of primary importance in this ideology and only negative emotions are discursively transformable as potentials for action.

This research offers an alternative to traditional discourses on totalitarian ideology. Findings of this research challenge the assumption that modern totalitarian system emerges in societies such as China because their traditional cultures contain elements conducive to totalitarianism.

CHAPTER 1

TOTALITARIANISM, CULTURE, AND IDEOLOGY

The term totalitarianism has been used to describe a new type of social political organization that emerged in the 20th century, a social political system that is an amalgamation of three hierarchical elements: power, money/property, and knowledge (Korchak 1994). Although totalitarian ideologies have been consistently identified as a distinctive feature of such social and political systems, studies on totalitarian systems have treated ideologies as secondary, doctrines that legitimate political powers. In this research I view ideology as discursive practice that opposes preexisting cultural traditions as its “other” and constitutes its own subjects. My goal is threefold. First, by providing an alternative epistemological foundation to ontological realism, I intend to establish a perspective from which ideology is seen as an autonomous space, within which discursive instances occur. Second, in order to examine various genres of ideological texts, I establish a set of narrative models that allows me to reconstruct the fundamental discursive structures of such texts and social and political processes that are of the production of the texts. Third, employing these theoretical and analytical models in a case study, I intend to reveal some aspects of the Chinese communist system that have been concealed by conventional totalitarianism discourse without basing my analysis on other metaphorical prototypes such as the German Nazi or Soviet Union. My focus is on one component of the Chinese communist system, ideology, which is consensually recognized as a distinctive feature of modern and contemporary totalitarian systems. This choice of subject matter makes it possible for me to bring in traditional Chinese culture as a basis for comparison. The discursive structure and

strategies of the communist ideological system are examined against its social cultural “other,” namely traditional Chinese culture.

Totalitarianism Discourses

Until very recently modernization and liberalist discourses have dominated the study of modern totalitarianism and totalitarian politics (Halberstam 1998). On one hand, modernization discourse on totalitarianism has resulted from efforts to understand the political and social oddities in the West such as Nazism. On the other, this discourse is a product of research on the Western economic and political expansion. Liberalist discourse can be understood as a self-understanding of the democratic Western societies that posit totalitarianism as its antithesis or its “political other.”

Modernization discourse focuses on the question, “How are totalitarian systems possible?” Studies along this tradition have brought social and political transformations into its perspective and examined the conditions that sufficed for the establishment of totalitarian systems (Arendt 1951, Moore 1966, Skocpol 1994 [1979], Dumont 1994). In general, scholars in this camp locate the emergence of totalitarian systems within a grander process of modernization, and view totalitarian systems as perversions of or departures from the goal of human emancipation; occasioned by the Enlightenment and facilitated by a focus on rationalization and instrumentalization (Halberstam 1999). In *Origins of Totalitarianism* (1951), Arendt argues that a necessary condition for the emergence of a totalitarian system is a historical moment when a society appears to be classless. According to Arendt, class always exists in an organized manner and is represented by a party or parties. If a majority of a society is not represented, it can be mobilized by some elite cliques through propaganda and terror, whereby other political competitors are destroyed. Thus the emergence of a

totalitarian system requires the absence of representative political parties, the availability of mobilizable masses, and manipulation of an elite. This argument follows Pareto's theory (1979 [1901]) on the circulation of elites and Borkenau's theory (1940) on totalitarianism. Arendt's theory differs from Pareto's in that it embeds the emergence of totalitarianism in specific historical backgrounds of capitalist development and the rise of modern nationalism.

Dumont (1994) examines specifically the formation of German totalitarian ideology. According to Dumont, the German intellectual elite had to deal with the contradiction between the universalist discourse of human emancipation and the need for a German national identity. Through a series of historical transformations, this elite managed to capture a German identity within an emancipation discourse lodged in a discourse that posits the German state as the highest form of the spirit of life. Like Arendt's theory, Dumont's is similar to Pareto's in its emphasis on the elite.

Sociologists such as Moore (1966) and Skocpol (1991 [1979]) do not explicitly address the emergence of totalitarianism. However, as part of modernization discourse, their studies on social revolutions shed light on the emergence of totalitarianism. Their works follow the trajectory of modernization. Different from Arendt, both Moore and Skocpol assume class as their basic unit of analysis and treat various classes as agents in revolutions. Thus, the breakdown of the old bureaucratic functionalities, the degree of resource mobilization of various classes, the allies they formed, and the conflicts among the classes are factors that eventually lead to the victory of one class, oftentimes giving rise to totalitarian systems.

Modernization sociologists, such as Rostow (1964), Smelser (1964), and Lipset (1963), prescribe stages of economic development and couple these stages with

corresponding political systems. In their theoretical scheme, political systems are outcomes of economic development. The inability of this type of theorization to explain the Soviet Union's level of economic development and its nonexistent level of democracy highlights the peculiarity or perverseness of such totalitarian systems relative to other more "normal" social forms.

In contrast to modernization discourse, liberalist discourse on totalitarianism focuses on what constitutes the "normal" operation of totalitarian systems. The question at the center of this discourse is, "How does a totalitarian system work?" Theories and studies along this tradition ground their definitions in Western democratic liberal ideals and treat totalitarian systems as anything that a democracy is not (Halberstam 1999). Although recognizing the rational components of a totalitarian system such as its routinized bureaucratic operation, Brzezinski (1956) characterizes totalitarian systems such as Nazi Germany and Soviet Union of fanatic, irrational, and brutal. He further argues that rationalization, bureaucratization, and economic development will not change the nature of the totalitarian system. Such developments would only enhance and improve the method of control through terror.

In his insightful book *Totalitarianism and the Modern Conception of Politics*, Halberstam (1999) summarizes this discourse as having four main components. First, a totalitarian system rules by force, not consent. It "eradicates political freedom, democratic process, and legality as such, by setting up the daily pronouncements of the ruler and of the party as an omnipotent force with unchecked powers to exercise control over the institutions of the state as well as all other social institutions" (1999, p. 5). Second, totalitarianism violates freedom of conscience by forcibly disseminating an ideology that is supposed to dominate all aspects of one's consciousness. Third, totalitarianism violates the boundaries

between public and private spheres by politicizing all domains of one's life. Fourth, the totalitarian system is both irrational and over-rational. It is irrational in that it appeals to "quasi-religious sentiments" to win support for policies that are neither in the interest of the individual nor in the interest of the community as a whole. It is over-rational in its technologies of control over the population and of maintaining power. Research guided by such definitions tends to reveal characteristics in opposition to those of democratic societies. Examples include Hollander's study of Soviet literature (1966), Inkles's report on daily life in the Soviet Union (1959), and Whyte's research on Chinese small groups and "political study" sessions (1974).

Most of the perspectives, models, and theories on totalitarian systems have severe limitations, partly due to their having been established by outsiders of totalitarian systems. Modernization discourse's difficulty lies in its own totalizing tendency both in its claim of historical continuity and in its claim of a single trajectory of development. Liberalist discourse highlights differences between democratic and totalitarian societies but fails to reveal either similarities between the two, or complexities of both. After China's Open Policy, especially after the collapse of the Soviet Union and the fall of the Berlin Wall, insiders within China, East Europe, and Russia have conducted many studies. Although these scholars have provided tremendous new information on experiences from inside those totalitarian systems, most of them have unreflectively embraced the two traditions just discussed.

There is always a risk of misinterpreting a passage of modern Chinese history when either of these traditions is applied. The risk is threefold. First, totalitarianism discourse has often been embedded in a modernization discourse. In this light, totalitarianism is understood

as a perverted and sometimes deformed artifact of the ideals of the Enlightenment with implications counter to emancipation (Arendt 1951, Halberstam, 1998). From these traditions questions arise about the Chinese case. In what sense are Chinese communist experiences the consequences of a modernizing process? In what sense did the Chinese communist regime “pervert” the Western ideal type of modernization and emancipation? Why and how did this perversion occur?

As a second limitation, the totalitarianism thesis embedded in modernization discourse is itself totalizing in that it attempts to unify the very different experiences of peoples under very different regimes by resorting to a presumption of historical continuity, coherence, and prescribed trajectory. For example, one might argue that the Chinese experience of modernization is characteristic of interruption, disruption, and incoherence. Then, one might ask, does the modernization perspective offer any meaningful interpretation of such Chinese experience?

The third limitation lies in the “Chinese characteristics” of the Chinese communist regime. For instance, Korchak (1994) points out that totalitarianism is not new in China. This leads one to question whether Chinese experience of totalitarianism might best be understood without a liberalist tradition as its antithesis. In other words, it becomes difficult to characterize the Chinese communist regime as a perverted version of “old-fashioned” Chinese totalitarianism.

Halberstam (1998) suggests that Westerner’s understanding of the Soviet Union was mostly achieved through equating the Soviet with the Nazi regime. In other words, the Nazi regime was used as a prototype (or a metaphor) in historical, social, and political studies to

render Soviet communist society comprehensible. Later, images of each regime were metaphorically and reciprocally used to understand the other.

My challenge is to develop a perspective without the shortcomings of the two existing metaphors of totalitarianism but that allows the uniqueness of the Chinese communist experiences to be understood. However, the above-mentioned limitations should not be understood as a rejection either of the two totalitarianism theses or of the research accomplishments associated with them. Pointing out these limitations functions as a reminder of problems this analysis is intended to overcome.

Culture and Cultural Frames

Culture as a theoretical concept was popularized by anthropologists and sociologists in the middle of the last century. Traditionally, culture was defined as the totality of the beliefs, values, customs, art, and laws of a society. Until the 1960s the sociological study of culture remained focused on moral values, beliefs, and customs supposedly held by consensual members of a society. During this period sociological studies of culture presumed an unquestioned expertise of the social scientist and an understanding of culture as ideas. Ethnomethodologists such Harold Garfinkel emerged in the 1960s with their unique research strategies and the theoretical backdrop of Schutz's phenomenology. Together with its epistemological foundation, this methodology is characterized by an emphatic focus on the practice of culture and a clear distinction between the researcher's theoretical structure and the practical theoretical structure of the researched. However, culture has not achieved a central place in sociological studies, mostly due to the conceptualization of culture as epiphenomenal, as secondary to social relations and structures (Hays 1994).

The early 1990s saw a renewed interest in the concept of culture and serious efforts at theorization (Kane 1991, Hays 1994, Emirbayer and Goodwin 1994). It appears that Giddens's (1984) structuration theory was one of the main sources of inspiration.

Traditionally the notion of social structure relied on an "architecture" metaphor that is resilient to change. As a result, social structure is understood as a powerful and immovable force that dictates social practice. Giddens's re-conceptualization of structure as generative rules and resources available to the social agent enables the sociologist to conceive culture as rules and hence a game metaphor replaces the architecture metaphor. However, the dualism of the cultural versus the social remained, though culture was granted more explanatory power and autonomy as a logic or frame for structuring social relations. As Hays (1994) points out, this wave of theorization adheres to the opposition between the cultural and the social, the material and the ideal, the objective and subjective, the external and the internal, the malleable and the non-malleable, the necessary and the contingent. In a sense, culture, as a theoretical concept, acquires its meaning through an opposition to its theoretical antithesis, namely the social. Hays seems to be one most acutely aware of the problems resulted from these binary oppositions. Therefore, she argues, "Culture is, in fact, both external and internal, objective and subjective, material and ideal. Not reducible to systems of social relations, culture has a logic of its own" (p. 70). However, this argument seems to be more an assertion of the binary oppositions than a theoretical strategy for overcoming the dualism predominant in conceptualizing culture.

Another feature of this wave of theorization is its assertion of "the analytic autonomy of culture" (Kane 1991, p. 56). The theoretical strategy of this assertion is to emphasize the internal logic of culture understood as a symbolic domain that organizes experiences and

structures social relations. To locate a source of dynamics of possible change, Kane (1991) resorts to Durkheim's concept of ritual. It is through rituals that culture is reproduced, renewed, and transformed, though Kane recognizes that based on her model, cultural transformation only happens within the boundary of a specific culture. This recognition is significant since until the perspective of culture acquires autonomy and the dualism, though avoided in Kane (1991), overcome, it does not seem possible to address changes between and among cultural boundaries.

Clifford Geertz, instead of treating culture as a subject matter, established the concept of culture as a distinctive theoretical perspective. For Geertz (1973), the concept of culture is essentially a semiotic one, suggesting a clear departure from the tendency in the traditional sociological enterprise for theoretical concepts to be depicted as referring reified entities that form causal chains. This departure was noticed by sociologists such as Schneider (1987) who translated this semiotic perspective into a textual one. Similar to Geertz, Schneider also argues that this profound switch of perspective entails a search for meaning instead of social laws (p. 810).

Syntheses of the two apparently distinctive perspectives was later achieved by systems theorists like Niklas Luhmann through the concepts of system and communication, and by cultural sociologists such as Zygmunt Bauman through the concept of practice. From the former perspective (Luhmann 1995, Fuchs 2001), the distinction between the social and the cultural disappears because social systems are conceived as communication proper, which could refer to any form of exchange. Here the concept of system is shed of its static link to the concept of structure, and is conceived as a self-sustaining, or autopoietic organism. Meaning in this model becomes a surplus of communication that refers back to

itself. Thus meaning is self-referential, the form in which the system understands itself. The possibility of cross-cultural-boundary changes is ensured as the system accommodates its environment and interpenetrates with other systems.

Bauman (1999, 1991) overcomes dualism by subsuming the symbolic (or the cultural) and the actual (or the social) under the concept of practice. Practice fuses the virtuality of discourse with the practicality of its production and reproduction. Bauman's study on the different experiences of the European Jews in Nazi Germany and Soviet Union shows that, on one hand, political policies and social forms are governed by a fundamental semantic structure of the "Jewish problem." On the other hand, his study shows that specific ideological discourses lead to different social and political practices. The Nazi and Soviet systems were similar in their intolerance of ambivalence, specifically, the ambivalence of the stranger (a concept originally proposed by Simmel (1908 [1971])). Both systems needed to classify the Jews, strangers in both societies, as either enemies or friends. In Nazi Germany Jews were classified as enemies while in the Soviet Union they were friends or at least, allies. This difference in the practice of policies regarding Jews was determined by specific ideological discourses: an essentially evolutionary view of races in Germany and a universalist emancipation discourse in the Soviet Union.

As part of an effort to reformulate his field of political science, Almond (1956) introduced a set of concepts commonly used by sociologists and anthropologists. He first proposed that a political system should be understood as a Parsonian action system that consisted of various political roles. According to Almond, "every political system is embedded in a set of meanings and purposes" (p. 396) according to which political actions are oriented. The patterns of a particular orientation to political actions are then defined as a

political culture. Almond stressed two points concerning the concept of political culture. First, he noted that a political culture does not necessarily coincide with a particular political system, but may extend beyond the boundaries of any particular political entity. Second, he asserted that political culture is not the same as general culture. Political culture is that part of a general culture that enjoys some autonomy.

Although Almond's framework (1956, 1989) received much positive attention, the result of it was, as critics such as Tucker (1973) have pointed out, fifteen years of political science treating politics and polity as an autonomous cultural system that functions in relation to other systems. Instead of treating political culture as a more or less autonomous system, Tucker proposes to view political systems from a cultural perspective. Basing his argument on Geertz's (1966) and Dumont's (1970) treatments of politics and polity as cultural practice, Tucker argues that the concept of culture should be treated as a perspective instead of as a Parsonian system.

Of theoretical importance to my effort of establishing a perspective of culture is Tucker's application of this perspective to the study of the communist system. He suggests that, instead of viewing communism as a political system imposed on the culture, communist societies can be understood as having undergone a cultural transformation from traditional societies. He states, "Every successful communist revolution has been attended by a sustained and strenuous effort of the newly established regime to transform the way of life of the population; and where the revolutionary takeover process has been protracted – as in China, Yugoslavia, and Vietnam – the transformation of culture has begun in the course of the revolution" (1973, p. 185). Moreover, he maintains that the cultural approach is not only pertinent to studying the formation of communist systems but is also pertinent to the study of

its sustenance, for which he uses the then ongoing Cultural Revolution in China as evidence of support.

Despite this perspective shift, the lack of models of culture seems to have hindered more fruitful research. What this perspective shift has accomplished is limited to a redirection to traditional cultural orientations in the society being studied in order to support a general hypothesis that the emergence of a totalitarian system in a certain society is compatible with its traditional political culture. Therefore, many researchers start their work with the assumption that the reason why totalitarian systems occurred in countries like Germany, Russia, and China, is because those societies had traditional authoritarian or totalitarian cultures (Korchak 1994, Schwartz 1965, Tucker 1987).

This assumption has been indirectly questioned by Chinese scholars. Although there were authoritarian (not necessarily totalitarian) elements in traditional Chinese societies, they were mostly restricted to certain domains. The order of traditional Chinese communities was maintained primarily by people of higher social status such as members of the literati and the gentry, scholars, and retired officials. Their authority was derived from their status rather than their formal affiliation with ruling governance. Official governance at the lowest level, the county, was very small, and its scope of authority covered mostly legal affairs. Therefore, it is safe to say that the power of the communist regime was the first to have successfully penetrated into the community level, and to have established party branches within villages. In fact larger villages were segmented into smaller units called production brigades, each of which had its own party branch. Although I shall not delve further into specific institutional changes, one may well ask: Is such a political arrangement really compatible with traditional Chinese culture? What kind of cultural transformation has occurred to render such an alien

social structure normal? To at least partly answer such questions, models of culture are needed to distinguish an imposed ideological system from a pre-existing culture.

Such models are not rare in sociological theories. However, seldom are such models constructed in a systematically formal way. Most of these models are inductively (intuitively) established for heuristic reasons. Nearly a hundred years ago, Simmel (1909) proposed that sociology be a science of “forms of sociation,” the primary forms of which were religion, science, art, and reality. Each of these forms of sociation contained ways of viewing oneself, other people, and the world, plus rules that govern the unfolding of interactions. Robert E. Park (1939) posited two ways of interaction: competition and communication. In his model, conflict was subsumed under competition as an unregulated form, while communication assumed two modes: adaptation and accommodation. Goffman (1974, 1982) used terms such as frame and interaction order to refer to such structures of perception and patterns of behavior. Intuitively one can observe that sociological theories seem to have been constructed following certain underlying frames or structures. For instance, culture has been conceived as quite different “things” such as resources (repertoire) (Swidler 1986), rules (Giddens 1984), performance (Goffman 1959), and power relations (Collins 1990, Smith 1992). Such hunches lead some sociologists to propose models of culture in a deductive and more formal manner.

Starting with the basic unit of interaction where only two persons are involved, Fiske (1991) relies on transitivity (intransitivity) and ranking of the outcomes as two dimensions of his model, arguing that there are four and only four basic models of social structure: communal sharing, authority ranking, equality matching, and market pricing. In this approach, transitivity is understood as the reach of the effect of an action. For instance, in the

communitarian sharing structure an inappropriate treatment of a person is perceived as an insult to a whole group. Such an action is transitive, in that an action directed at an individual is perceived as having effects on the whole community. Ranking refers to the way in which the outcome of an action is evaluated. For instance, in the authority ranking structure the outcome of one's action is ranked in term of an enhanced or undermined authority. Important for this research is the implication that each model implies a way of perceiving one's self and others and each model is a mode of interaction. For example, in the communal sharing mode one's individuality is merged with the identity of the community, whereas in the market-pricing mode one's position is ranked according to a unified and supposedly fair system, the market.

Roberts (2003) uses the term cultural frame to refer to the fundamental ways in which one perceives one's self and others, and the interactional patterns that result. Since my research heavily depends on Roberts's model of cultural frames, it deserves a detailed discussion. I would also like to note that my rendering of this model is more heuristic than formal because the formalized model requires much more space and theoretical preparation than the scope and scale of this research allow. Furthermore, such models can be constructed on various bases. As Roberts himself would agree, this is not "the" model but one possible alternative of many. The key is that once the foundation is laid out, one has to follow consistently the internal logic determined by one's assumptions and elementary relations among concepts. This point is partly supported by the fact that my reconstruction of his model is conducted in a different manner than Roberts', though I would be more than glad to acknowledge that the fundamental ideas are all available in Roberts's works.

Roberts notes that for any event and its outcome to be meaningful, one needs to ask either why- or how-questions (or both). An answer to a why-question traces a logical sequence back to a set of initial assumptions. For instance, in answering the question “why is it the case that C,” one needs to make clear that B implies C and A implies B. Thus the explanatory strategy is to infer from C to B and from B to A in a way that ensures whenever A is the case, C follows logically and (if supported by one’s experiences) empirically. An answer to a how-question starts with a set of definitions of A that operationally implies B. C then results in the event of B. In sum, the answer to a why-question requires a inductive discursive operation that locates experiences within a conceptual scheme while the answer to a how-question needs a deductive one that locates experiences within a process. The other dimension of the strategies has to do with how one recognizes something, for instance, “C is the case.” Again, there are two possible strategies. One can recognize that “C is the case” by either identification or distinction. Identification requires that one assert that “C is the case” by arguing that C`, the empirical C, is the same as (or similar to) a previously established concept. Note that when communicating this strategy, a concept is held constant and a discursive operation is carried out to assert an identity. Or, one can distinguish C` from a previously established concept as its contrary or opposite. Thus “C is the case” is recognized through its distinction from another set of concept, for instance, D that is not the case. To combine the two dimensions of discursive operation we obtain a scheme shown in Table 1.1.

With the “identification through process” strategy, a set of concepts and their operational relations are established which guarantees the appearance of C. Here C is understood as a set of C`, or empirical Cs. Then a C` is discursively evaluated against the sufficient set of operations. If all the operations occur, then C` as a case of C, occurs. The

“distinction through process” strategy only differs from the first in that it aims at establishing at least one distinction through at least two operational sets. For instance, C' is C because it satisfies all the conditions of C and lacks at least one condition for D. Here the empirical case evaluated could be either C or D.

Table 1.1: Types of Discursive Operation

Question	Answer	
	Same	Different
How is C the case?	Identification through process	Distinction through process
Why is C the case?	Identification through schema	Distinction through schema

With the third strategy, identification through schema, one attempts to offer a description of a schema in which C is implied by B which is in turn implied by A. “C is the case” is then established as the result of an inferential logical move. The “distinction through schema” strategy differs from the third only in its inclusion of at least one other concept (or concept set), for instance D, that is semantically opposed to C. Thus the logical steps lead to a conclusion that C is the case because it lacks at least one condition for D.

Each cell in table 1.1 refers to one way of perceiving and understanding. If one considers the perceptions referred to in each of the table cells as perceptions people have of each other, the following forms of personhood emerge. In the upper left cell, the individual is perceived by default as being in a process of making something (C) appear and she/he is understood as the sum of her/his resources or abilities (evidenced by her/his past accomplishment) to make the “thing” appear. The “thing” that the individual is committed to making appear is defined as a goal, a culturally valued concept.

In the upper right cell, an individual is also perceived as being in a process. However, what is highlighted in the perceiving is the distinctive set D instead of C. Because if one

condition for C is absent, D` is perceived. That is, if D` is perceived, one condition for C is absent and thus “C is not the case.” Suppose C is a culturally valued set, and then if D is perceived, a problem occurs. Thus an individual is by default perceived as in a process of preventing something (the culturally unvalued set D) from appearing by following the regulation of the culturally valued set C. Set C can then be understood as a set of requirements.

With the lower left cell, an individual is perceived as being a category whose relations to other categories in the schema determine the nature of the category of which she/he is. What one is doing is understood as part of her/his being. On one hand, one’s actions are regulated by the category of which she/he is. On the other hand, one’s actions are perceived as manifestations of the nature of the category. Because it is usually defined in relations to other categories in the schema, the nature or essence of the category, can be understood as obligations.

Again, with the last cell, the distinctive set D is crucial since the discursive operation ends with distinction instead of identification. In this cell an individual is either perceived as belonging to the set C or its distinctive set D, which is semantically defined in opposition to C. If we bring in a cultural dimension and posit that C is a valued set and D is an unvalued set, then empirically, one can be read as either one of “us” or one of “them”, or, either an enemy or a friend. Thus the acts associated with the valued set can be understood as rights while acts associated with the unvalued set can be understood as non-rights or violations of rights (Wang and Roberts 2002).

It should be noted that in the first two strategies the conception of the end (that C is the case) is held constant. The key to the strategies consists in “manipulation” of the process

that supposedly leads to the end. Whereas, in the third and fourth strategies, the conceptual schemata are held constant, a discursive operation (i.e. one of the four discursive processes) is carried out to show the consistency or inconsistency between the ideal and the empirical.

Roberts (2003) has named these four cultural frames individualistic, mutualist, essentialist, and reformist respectively. It should be noted that a cultural frame does not necessarily correspond perfectly to a specific culture. To identify a certain culture as individualistic or essentialist is an empirical issue not a theoretical one. Hence, a culture identified as primarily individualistic may develop forms of interaction in accordance with other frames. For instance, even if we identify traditional Chinese culture as primarily essentialist, we would be remiss not to recognize its reformist elements, especially in the sphere of official governance and interactions among the governing elite.

In this dissertation the Chinese Communist regime is examined in terms of its culture, that is to say, the regime is viewed as a semiotic system that reproduces itself through discursive practice. The first hypothesis, derived from Roberts' model of cultural frames, is that the Chinese communist ideological system is consistent with a reformist frame.

In summary, one of the advantages of the cultural approach is its avoidance of the dualism that characterizes many sociological studies discussed above. Another vantage point is the relocation of the ontology of the regime from a presupposed reality domain to a discursive domain. This is, of course, not a rejection of the concept of reality but an assertion that realities are the products of discursive practice. This fundamental theoretical assumption has been suggested, if not explicitly expressed, by sociologists like Mead, (1934) and Goffman (1959), and especially by contemporary theorists like Bulter (1990), Bruner (1990),

Gergen (1994, 1999), Harré (1993 1983), and Somers (1994, 1995). This “discursive turn,” or “interpretive turn” Geertz (1983, p. 233), will be discussed in detail in chapter 2.

Ideology

Ideology has been consistently identified as an important component of totalitarian system (Arendt 1951, Brzezinski 1956, Cassinelli 1962, Gleason 1995, Shlapentokh 2001, Piekalkiewicz and Penn 1995). Totalitarian ideology may very well be the defining feature that distinguishes modern totalitarian systems from historical dictatorships and tyrannies (Arendt 1951, Piekalkiewicz and Penn 1995). However, most theories and research on totalitarian systems either identify ideology as instrumental to the workings of the system or as a doctrine that serves as the basis for party and state formation. In other words, ideology is secondary to social and political structural processes. Cassinelli (1962, 1960) came closer to arguing that the distinctive feature of modern totalitarian system is ideology. Primarily due to the lack of a perspective that could avoid the divorce between language and action and the lack of a methodology that could tackle the textual data, he dismissed any theory that was centered on ideology.

Later scholars of totalitarian systems paid more attention to ideology, especially the different ideological strategies employed by different totalitarian regimes. Gleason (1995) noticed that the Soviet regime aimed to extract confessions so that the author could be removed from society. In contrast, the Chinese communist regime attempted to “cure the disease and save the man. (1995, p. 95)” In a sense, Chinese communists took a more proactive approach to indoctrination and conversion instead of destroying the dissident physically. Of course one can still be skeptical about the accuracy of the evaluation,

especially if one takes into consideration differences in practice of ideological policies at different phases of both regimes. It appears that with both regimes, the early stage of consolidation of power was characterized by violent means in dealing with the regimes' enemies. Once power was consolidated to certain degree, both regimes took more proactive measures in indoctrinating an ideology.

Despite the many studies on totalitarian ideology, the concept of ideology remains insufficiently clearly defined. Historical and contemporary debates on ideology along the divisions of various discursive traditions add much to the complexity of conception of ideology. For instance, Kinloch (1981) divides sociological writings on ideology into three categories: the conservative, the radical, and the liberal. The conservative discourse, for instance, conservative sociological writings locate ideology in a system within which ideology is understood as functional (thus necessary) for the system's survival (Parsons 1971). Radical writings highlight the separation of individual rationality and political irrationality in modern capitalist and communist societies, arguing that ideological systems are components of dominant powers that operate to restrict certain segments of the population from accessing political resources. Instances of this discourse include C. Wright Mills' work on culture and power (1959), most of the works of the Frankfurt School, and Althusser's (1984) influential chapter on state ideological apparatus (SIA).

Liberal writings on ideology take the individual as the origin of ideology. According to this school (Garfinkel, 1996, Homans 1958), ideology arises from interpersonal exchanges assuming rationality as an individual disposition. Therefore, ideology is the result of rationalization taking the form of common sense, entailed by interpersonal and inter-group processes.

However, this categorization is not without its problems. For instance, the usage of terms such as conservative and radical, with their strong political connotations, suggests that this categorization might be “ideological” itself. The question then becomes, “How can a discursive field be defined as ideology?” The key seems to rely on the answer to the question “What is then a non-ideology?” Differently put, in opposition to what antithesis or “other” is the concept ideology, meaningful?

The first discursive strategy is to assert a “real” reality. Ideology is then conceived as a symbolic representation that distorts reality. Ideology is the “false consciousness” produced as effect of a dominant system (Marx and Engels, 1845-46, Adorno 1991). However, variations exist in this camp. Arguing that German ideology creates an upside-down consciousness about reality (“from heaven to earth”), Marx and Engels (1845-46, p??) strongly claims a starting point, namely the reality of man (“from earth to heaven”), from which a consciousness about the “real” reality can be reestablished. Modern Marxists such as Gramsci (1926[1988]) and Lukacs (1971[1923]) emphasize ideology as a transformative force. Although the claim of a “real” reality” is not as strong, they both start with a concept of ideology that is conditioned by material processes, the “real” reality. Theorists of the Frankfurt School view ideology as an encompassing system that legitimates one reality, namely the capitalist system, but conceals other possible “better” realities. Here the claim of a real reality is the weakest due to their awareness of the difficulty in arguing for such a reality while defining ideology as all encompassing. However, their assertion of such a reality is suggested in their claim that they could conceive “better” realities that are fundamentally different from the status quo. Althusser’s theory (1984) defines ideology as

“imaginary relations” to one’s real conditions of existence. This definition suffices to place Althusser in this camp.

A second discursive strategy opposes ideology to science. Mannheim’s (1968[1936]) distinction between particular conception of ideology and total conception of ideology and his proposal of the scientist’s position strongly suggest such an opposition. For Mannheim, the particular conception of ideology views ideology as false ideas, essentially “lies”, consciously or unwittingly offered by an opponent for his/her interest. In contrast, a total conception of ideology conceives ideology as the “characteristics and composition of the total structure of the mind of this [an] epoch or of this [a] group.” (p.50) Mannheim recognizes that the grasp of this total structure is not easy to break. He demonstrates that his contemporary scholarly efforts such as positivist (for Mannheim also relativist) approach to ideology is nothing but part of the *Weltanschauung* of his times, a world outlook of his epoch. For Mannheim, the only way to achieve a scientific understanding of an ideology or in general, *Weltanschauung* of any epoch, is to adopt a hermeneutic approach. The first step is to recognize the boundedness of any social and political discourse. “[T]hat political-historical knowledge is always bound up with a mode of existence and a social position. (1968[1936], p.166)” He also points out that this is often the basis on which the possibility of truth and understanding is denied. The second step requires that the sociology of knowledge disentangle “every concretely existing bit of ‘knowledge’ from the evaluative and interest-bound element, and eliminating it as source of error with a view to arriving at a ‘non-evaluative,’ ‘supra-social,’ ‘supra-historical’ realm of ‘objectively’ valid truth. (1968[1936], p. 166)” However, one cannot be sure how far this separation can go. Thus the third step leads one to a moment of reflection instead of a conclusive solution. According to

Mannheim, the third step is to arrive at the awareness that our own intellectual mediation is “bound up with a mode of existence” and with “one’s social position. (p. 166)” Thus if we are willing to “retreat from decisions” (p.169) we would benefit from an “expansion of our horizon (p. 169)” and a “greater intellectual mastery of our world. (p.169)” Mannheim’s argument implied in his approach is that knowledge is a historical process, an open discourse. This argument departs from the Marxian perspective that claims a knowable and known reality independent from any ideology. However, Mannheim is a realist in that he does assume a knowable reality. But this reality of Mannheim’s is not easily known. In a sense we can always get closer to the truth if we adhere to the scientist’s position which enables us to disentangle our knowing process from the grasp of preexisting ideological (i.e., historical, positional, and interested) knowledge.

Of contemporary theorists, Habermas (1970) is probably one of the most akin to Mannheim. Habermas’ primary concern is communication whose ideal conditions are distorted by power — the colonization of the life-world by the systems. In other words, the ideal conditions for communication are distorted by political and capitalist economic systems. For communication to occur in an undistorted way, the scientist (or philosopher) needs to establish theories that could help restore the “original scene” through their inquiry. This theories bridge the gap between the pre-signified scene (what really happened) and the signified world of meaning (the distorted or suppressed communicative act). Although Habermas asserts the pre-signified “original scene”, he does suggest that this scene is not accessible until a sign system, such as theories, is established to tap into it. This approach bears strong similarity to Mannheim’s approximation to truth.

The third discursive strategy rejects the notion of a reality that is independent from any representation. For this school of scholars, reality is always a representation (Gergen 1999, 1994; Edwards, Shotter, and Potter 1995). In discussing the “discursive turn” and constructionism, Gergen (1999) suggests that this fundamental perspective switch relocates the ontology of reality in discourse. In other words, a reality is understood as effects whose causal roots reside in discursive practice. According to this argument, science, the last stronghold of realism, is founded on ideological basis such as objectivity and an autonomous knowing subject. Discursive activity is fundamentally ideological in that all discourses contain assumptions and beliefs that cannot be empirically tested. Foucault’s (1995[1977]) fusion of the term power/knowledge suggests that knowledge has to exercise a certain type of power and power is always based on a specific knowledge system. More relevant to this research is Foucault’s objection to a presumed Cartesian subject. For Foucault, subject and subjectivity are always produced by a power. Thus the operation of power, structured by discourse or knowledge, produces its constituents, i.e. subjects. The notion of subject is only meaningful in relation to a specific type of power. Some contemporary theorists such as Judith Butler (1990) and Jagose (1996) criticize Foucault for his presumption of a generalized body since in Foucault’s works the body is only thing left as pre-power. Butler suggests that the pre-subjected body is an empty concept — a residue of Foucault’s implied realism. For the Butler the body is inconceivable without discourse. The body is always the body of a subject — an effect of a power and knowledge system.

Despite his definition of ideology as imaginary relations, Althusser (1971) deviates from his starting point in his elaboration of a theory of ideology. He argues that we, as subjects, are always subjects of an ideology. Note the two connotations of the concept of

subject: subject of subjectivity and subject to a dominant power. According to Althusser (1984), the defining “function” of ideology is that all ideologies constitute concrete individuals as subjects. It can be recognized that Althusser starts with a realist definition of ideology but concludes with a constructionist understanding.

In this research I take the constructionist perspective viewing the Chinese communist ideology as a living and lived discursive system. It is living as the totality of a system and is lived by its subjects, its constituents. Subjects are integrated into the system through a process of identification (or recognition to use Althusser’s term) or discursive practice such as telling personal stories and expressing personal opinions. Such story-telling and opinion-expressing are, on the one hand, the ways in which the system sustains itself, and on the other hand, the ways the system produces its constituents. Therefore, examining the products of such practice will help understand how the ideological system works and also shed light on the antinomy between the traditional Chinese cultural system, which the communist system has never completely eradicated, and the communist ideological system itself.

Mechanisms of Ideological Systems

The challenge then is to establish a model that would treat ideology as discursive practice rather than a static set of ideas. The inspiration comes from a few sources. First, Lyotard (1991[1979]) consistently uses the term of pragmatics to refer to the operationalization of a grand narrative (to be discussed in the next chapter) into governance and to people’s taken-for-granted perception of the governance and other forms of institutions. In Lyotard’s discussion, a semantic field, a static set of ideas and their relations, constitutes a pragmatic field to the extent that it structures the operations that lead to concrete forms of governance, perception, and meaning. Moreover, Lyotard characterizes the post-

modern condition as a loss of the center, the loss of the credibility and validity of the basic assumptions of a grand narrative. This center implies not only discursive elements that are the most fundamental but also a foundation for power. A similar approach is present in Dumont's comparative study of German and French ideologies (Dumont 1970). According to Dumont, the French ideology is an operation to settle the tension between a primary universal individualist discourse and a secondary communitarian discourse, whereas German ideology is one that resolves the tension between a primary communitarianism and a secondary individualism. Individualist and communitarian positions exist in both ideology systems. The tension or contradiction of these two elements requires an operation to, on the one hand, sustain the contradiction so that both be meaningful and, on the other hand, resolve the tension in practice so that a member can make sense of his/her experiences consistently in accord with that ideology. For instance, the French typically perceives a legitimate government as a means with which the welfare of each individual is guaranteed. The government is then represented in an ideology as a resolution of the contradiction between individualism and communitarianism. In contrast, the German tends to see the government as representative of the German nation. Welfare of each individual is ensured within the boundaries of the German identity.

Althusser's (1984) distinction between "the Subject" and "subjects" suggests a similar notion. The Subject cannot be identified with any concrete subject. It only exists in a discourse, as its center. Thus in this research, I identify this center, or Subject, as a grand narrative that is sustained through ongoing interpretations of specific events.

To establish a model of subjects I resort to the theories of Althusser, Geertz, Butler, and social psychologists like Gergen and Harré. Both Althusser (1984) and Butler (1990) try

to establish a concept to describe how the Subject (i.e. discourse) produces its subjects. For Althusser, this mechanism is called interpellation or hailing. Here the Subject is the hailer who calls the individual until she/he recognizes (or mis-recognizes) her/himself as the one who is called upon. This mechanism implies a “name” offered by the Subject and a consciousness-producing process of identification. The individual becomes a subject to the Subject through acknowledging her/himself as identified by the name. This process is realized through the operation of Ideological State Apparatus (ISA) that includes the education system, the family, church, the media and other institutions.

The difficulty in Althusser’s model lies in its presupposition of the pre-subjection individual. Like Foucault’s “generalized body,” the concept of the pre-subjection or pre-signified individual is an empty concept — a Cartesian residue (Hirst 1979) or a theoretical convenience that only introduces contradictions. Butler (1990) replaces this notion with the conception of the body as a social discursive boundary. It is through a mechanism of inscription — an operation of the discourse — that the boundary is established, and a subject is embodied and produced. This model relocates the process of power and subjection completely into a discursive space where the lack of any “real” foundation is the very reason why the discursive boundaries are unstable. Another of Butler’s key concepts is “performativity,” which is an inherent feature of discourse. In brief, inscription is realized through iterative performances. Therefore, despite superficial similarities, the fundamental difference between Althusser’s model and Butler’s model lies in their different ways of conceiving the subject either as a unified continuous entity or as instances of discursive performativity. Althusser’s starting point is the subject-to-be. Interpellation and recognition produce a relatively stable subject. Butler conceives subject as fleeting performativity. If

certain consistent patterns are discerned in “individuals”, they are testimonies to the power of discourse rather than evidence of a unified and consistent subject.

The differences between Althusser’s and Butler’s models mean that adopting one model entails rejection of the other. Geertz (1973) proposes a middle ground — a strategy that suspends the difference that is not relevant to analytical formulation. In discussing two sociological theories on ideology, strain theory and the theory of interest, Geertz indicates that sociologists tend to jump directly from the determinants of ideology to its effects, ignoring the mediation of a semiotic and semantic domain. The lack of theoretical and analytical approaches to tackle the “connecting element — the autonomous process of symbolic formulation” (1973, p. 207) is the very reason why research done from either perspective is often based on misinterpretations of social phenomena.

The middle ground Geertz established is essentially analytic. Similar to some political scientists discussed in the first section of this chapter, Geertz emphasizes the importance of an autonomous semiotic and semantic space. In a critique of content analysis, Geertz clarifies this emphasis by noting the analyst’s strategy. “Themes are outlined, of course, among the content analysis, they are even counted. But they are referred for elucidation, not to other themes nor to any sort of semantic theory, but either backward to the effect they presumably mirror, or forward to the social reality they presumably distort.” (1973, p. 207) The implication of Geertz’s critique for such research is twofold. First, if we do not grant discursive space its deserved autonomy, not only will this not be a resolution of the contradiction between Althusser’s ontological realism and Butler’s primacy of discourse, but it will also distract us from any valid understanding of ideological systems. Second, instead of trying to resolve the philosophical dispute inherent in these models, we can benefit from

bracketing the controversy and focusing on the indisputable. What is bracketed is the assumption of the pre-subjection subjectivity. What is indisputable is a discursive space — the ideological system as an autonomous object to be studied.

Components of Ideological Systems

In addition to its grand narrative (i.e. its core or center), another important component of an ideological system is the subject or its practical constituents. Before postmodernist writings, “the subject” was usually understood as a personality, a set of individual cognitive, emotional, and interactional dispositions. This tradition is probably best exemplified in Fromm’s work (1941) on German Fascist psychology and Adorno’s work on the authoritarian personality.

Fromm’s wrote before the Third Reich had collapsed. Although a psychologist, his focus was on the social conditions that gave rise to an ideology such as German Fascism and the reason why it appealed to so many people, particularly the lower middle class. Fromm argued that the bleak socioeconomic conditions after World War I and the newly emerging democracy in Germany placed the lower middle class in a very insecure situation. It was freedom itself that scared these Germans into embracing Fascism and communism as authorities. He described this embrace as *escape from freedom*. However, a more profound explanation was to be found in the German culture. Fromm argued that the German individual had a disposition to identify with an authority — a disposition produced by the German style family life, where the father was an authority figure. As a nation Germans had previously acquired such a self-identity through the monarch, whose authority was seriously undermined by Germany’s defeat in World War I. Under such socioeconomic circumstance, ideology started to appeal to more and more of the German people. Not long after Hitler

became the Prime Minister, the Nazi regime became identified with the German nation as a consequence of the Nazi ideology.

The focus of Adorno's work (1950) was on what he called the authoritarian personality. Adorno agreed with Fromm on Germans' tendency to embrace an authority. Moreover, Adorno argued that this was only one side of such a personality. This side was manifested as obedience to authority, rigid adherence to ideas of right and wrong, conformity and submission to authoritarian figures such as parent, teacher, boss, and leader. The other side of the authoritarian personality was a tendency to redirect one's frustration and anger to an outsider, someone who was different. Moreover, this personality tended to project their frustrated desires (e.g., for sex and violence) to the outsider. Thus, an authoritarian personality would always feel that he was surrounded by oversexed, immoral, dishonest, and violent people.

Both Fromm and Adorno suggested that a certain type of personality is susceptible to authoritarian ideology. This personality uses polarized categorization for the people around them, applies differential attitudes and behaviors toward people within different categories, and expresses emotional propensities such as anger and hatred—all dispositions and tendencies considered as individual psychological traits.

Later empirical studies on communist regimes such the Soviet Union and China depict these features as components of the ideological systems. For instance, Hollander's study on Soviet literature (1966) examines the cognitive, behavioral, and emotional traits of the heroes and anti-heroes in Soviet novels. The cognitive feature of the hero shows a close identification with the party and the nation, which Hollander labels as party-mindedness and patriotism. Hero's behavioral traits are a readiness of uncovering subversive acts of the

enemies, a willingness to work hard, a lack of spontaneity, and a drive to improve oneself. Hero's emotional traits include a propensity to hate and feel shame, selective emotionalism, and instant enthusiasm. It is worth noting that Hollander does not treat these features as individual propensities, but as part of an ideological discourse.

Hollander's work is rare in its focus on the subjectivity a totalitarian ideology tries to produce. Most studies on totalitarian ideology do not grant ideology an autonomous status. Instead ideologies are treated as institutions that function to legitimate power structure and other institutions. Hence, components of an ideology are usually identified with discrete social institutions as sets of ideas — nationalism with the government, socialism with the economy, and revolutionary discourse with the military and police. Of the few studies that touch upon the issue of personality or subjectivity produced under totalitarian systems, such personality or subjectivity is treated as a deformed psyche, or at least as an abnormal psychic entity (Kelman and Hamilton 1989, Korchak 1994).

In this research I follow the lead of Hollander and use a conventional social psychological scheme to identify three components of the subject: cognition, behavior, and emotion. Relocating the three components in ideological discursive processes, I examine the cognitive component through the process of identification (telling personal stories), the behavioral component through action orientation (expressing possible action during situated events), and emotions through emotional display (immediate reactions to events).

Structure of Ideological Systems

The structure of an ideology can be analytically defined as the set of binary oppositional relations of the semantic elements that hold ideological discourse together and structure its production. Therborn (1980) proposes a scheme that generates four types of

ideological discourses. This scheme has two semantic dimensions that address two questions that an ideology has to answer: “Who am I?” and “Where am I?” Each question can be answered in two possible ways. To the who-question, an answer can be composed by either claiming a fixed existential status or locating the individual in a history. The answer to the second question can be established by either including the individual in a category such as humankind, a group, or a community, or locating the individual in a social position in relation to others.

Although in his elaboration Therborn tends to blur distinctions among the types of discourses, his scheme does suggest four fundamental ideological perspectives. The inclusive-existential ideology locates the individual in a community and her/his existence is asserted as a member of the community (e.g. humanity). The inclusive-historical ideology positions the individual in a group that has a history. The individual understands her/himself as being a member of the group and his position as justified by the historical discourse of the group. The positional-existential ideology asserts the individual as a being of certain form that is her/his relations to other people and her/his environment. The form of existence is the essence of her/his being in the sense that “who she/he is” is manifest through her/his form. Thus, her/his actions are evaluated according to whether they are of certain form. Finally the positional-historical ideology distinguishes itself from the positional-existential ideology through the notion that one’s position in relations to other members of the society is historical. The individual understands who s/he is through a personal history. She/he is what she/he does and achieves.

Different from Dumont (1994), Therborn does not distinguish between primary and secondary discourse. It is the interplay of two answers that constitutes an ideological

discourse. Furthermore, like Roberts (2002, 2003) Therborn does not posit a one-to-one correspondence between an ideology type and an empirically identified ideology. Instead, these types are understood as fundamental semantic fields that practically structure ideologies. As illustrated in Table 1.2, Therborn's ideology types and Roberts's cultural frames have a close correspondence. In combination with the above discussion on Roberts's cultural frames, a synthesis of both their ideas is obtained.

Each cell in the Table 1.2 is a combination of answers to the two fundamental questions. The terms in the cells are borrowed from Roberts's cultural frames. Therborn's existential-inclusive ideology corresponds to Roberts's mutualist frame. In this frame an individual obtains her/his identity through inclusion in an asserted community. The inclusive-historical ideology corresponds to reformist frame in which an individual obtains her/his identity through a historical discourse about a group. It should be noted that the historical discourse is sustained through interpretation and reinterpretation of ongoing events and thus personal identities are subjected to redrawing of group boundaries.

Table 1.2: Type of Ideological Discourse and Cultural Frames

Subjectivities of "In-the-World"	Subjectivities of "Being"	
	(Fixed)	(In a process)
	Existential	Historical
Inclusive in a group or community	Mutualist	Reformist
In a Social Positional	Essentialist	Individualistic

Therborn's positional-existential ideology corresponds to Roberts's essentialist frame in which an individual is understood as a fixed category. The individual's actions are perceived as exhibiting the essence of the category. One's social position is determined in accord with the position of one's category in a social structure. Finally, the positional-

historical ideology corresponds to the individualistic frame. In this frame, an individual obtains self-identity through what she/he has done and is doing. Self-identity is not stable in this frame because it depends on the unfolding of a personal history.

The above discussion has sketched out four fundamental semantic fields that can be mapped onto empirical fields, i.e. the actual ideological discourses that Ricoeur (1975), calls instances of discourse. According to Ricoeur, a linguistic system exists only virtually until it is produced as an instance of discourse. However, it should be noted that these types of ideology and cultural frames discussed thus far only address the discursive strategies with which a person obtains her/his identity. One more question needs to be answered, “In which frame(s) is grand narrative possible?”

At this point it suffices to define a grand narrative as a historical discourse about a group, community, society, nation, civilization, or humanity. It appears that the individualistic (positional-historical) ideology uses a strategy that involves a discursive presentation of a process or “history.” However, this history is a personal history, which does not qualify for a grand narrative. One can also argue that because the positional-existential ideology naturalizes social identities by resorting to a timeless cosmos, grand narrative does not exist in the essentialist frame either. Therborn’s scheme suggests that historical discourses about whole groups or communities only exist in the two inclusive types of ideology, which correspond to mutualist and reformist frames. The differences between the two types of grand narrative will be discussed in chapter 2 in terms of their different modes of causality.

In this chapter I have discussed briefly two discourses on totalitarianism and three orientations in the study of ideology. My discussion on components of ideological systems

identifies the subject matter of this research as the grand narrative of the Chinese communist ideology and the identification strategies, action-orientation, and emotional patterns of the subject constituted by the ideology. The elaboration on Roberts's model of cultural frames and Therborn's model of ideology types delineates the semantic fields of all possible structures of ideology. This delineation provides not only a theoretical foundation but also an analytic scheme whose importance will become clear in later chapters.

CHAPTER 2

DISCOURSE, NARRATIVE, AND MEANING

In the previous chapter I discussed an alternative approach to the study of the Chinese communist ideological system, an approach that views totalitarianism as a cultural system that operates in the form of discursive practice. In this chapter I locate elements of such an ideological system within a concrete domain, namely, texts. This location should not be understood as an identification of material processes within texts, but as a relocation of the texts into a discourse and its discursive practice. Moreover, this fundamental shift in perspective provides new theoretical and analytic approaches to many important subjects of sociological concern. Once this shift is completed, texts are brought into perspective and acquire an autonomous status of a field to be examined. Within this chapter, specific genre of text, the narrative, receives special attention here because of its role in structuring experiences. Moreover, the structures of action and emotion will be discussed with an emphasis on modality and modal semantics.

Discursive Practice and Text

As discussed in chapter 1, Geertz has noted that one problem with the sociological study of ideology has been the absence of theoretical and analytic means to address the symbolic mediation of social processes. Sociologists usually forego such mediation in a leap from determinants or conditions to effects. Although he advocates establishing a well-deserved autonomous domain of meaning, Geertz does not completely reject the realist assumption that ideology is determined by material conditions. A fundamental dilemma of

Geertz's approach is highlighted by the argument that material conditions and effects per se are not conceivable unless they are conceived with the mediation of meaning. Resolution of this dilemma requires a perspectival switch, a switch that recognizes a symbolic field that is not merely a mediating segment of a social process but a process on its own.

The constructionist "movement" in the 1980s and '90s provides the philosophical, theoretical, and analytical foundations for such a perspectival switch. Gergen (1999, 1994) summarizes the fundamental assumptions of this movement in a series of works. First, he postulates that the terms by which we account for the world come from social practices occurring in social relations instead of being dictated by the world we attempt to account for. This is a rejection of the Cartesian tradition, according to which the mind is understood metaphorically as a mirror that reflects the objective world. For the constructionist, objectivity is a rhetorical achievement through discourse based on such metaphors. Once this metaphor is examined in parallel with other metaphorical images of the mind, objectivity is shown as the effect of discursive practice. Second, our accounts of the world, are not sustained by the world's objective validity but by its functions in social processes. Third, language derives its significance from its functions within patterns of relationship, and to appraise of existing forms of discourse is to evaluate patterns of cultural life. One profound implication of the latter two assumptions with respect to the study of ideology is the abandonment of any attempt at assessing the ways in which an ideological system "distorts" reality. Instead, a new objective is established, i.e. the examination of the ways in which ideological systems function in social practice.

Another implication of this switch is the centering of discourse and, in particular, language processes. Here discourse is understood as the totality of semiotic process including

operations on various levels such as semantic, syntactic, and textual and in various domains such as speaking and writing (Greimas and Courtès 1982). This centering of discourse has given rise to studies on many subjects that had excluded or at least marginalized the role of discourse. The French philosopher, Paul Ricoeur (1991), brings social action into discourse through a series of theoretical operations. First he distinguishes human action from social action. Human action is an action specific to the situation in which it occurs. In a sense it is pre-signified and opens the possibility for signification. Second, he argues that only those human actions that are relevant to situations other than those in which they occur would leave marks in history and thereby become social actions through signification. The “mark” is made through an operation he terms as fixation, just like writing is a fixation of possible speech acts, a human action is fixated through signification. Therefore, he argues that social actions can be studied as texts. For Ricoeur (1991, p. 151), “...action as meaningful, may become an object of science, without losing its character of meaningfulness, through a kind of objectification similar to the fixation that occurs in writing.” What is suggested by Ricoeur is that social actions, as meaningful, are always signified or discursively fixated actions. What physically happens is lost in time. However, through signification we retain the part of it that transcends the specific situation in which it occurs.

One form of signification, writing, and its product, text, are of particular importance to my research. According to Ricoeur (1991, 1981), text is, first of all, a specific form of discourse. Each text is an instance of discursive production. Second, text differs from other forms of discourse such as speech acts in that it is a fixation of a possible speech act. Unlike speech acts, which bring interlocutors into one unified situation, text separates the author and the reader by its very presence. Following Ricoeur’s discussion on the transformation of

human action into meaningful action through signification, one may argue that text always transcends the situation in which it is produced and thus always bears social and cultural significance. In reviewing a set of anthropological studies on text and text production, Hanks (1989) suggests that textual production is a power process. "... not only does text have locutionary, illocutionary, and perlocutionary force potential, but it is also a powerful mode of naturalizing social reality and socializing natural reality. (1989, p. 118)."

Defining text as a fixated signification through writing leads to the question, "What are the modes of textual production or signification? This question brings us from a theoretical into an analytic mode, though one may note that these modes are oftentimes inextricably entangled.

Returning to the model of ideology established in chapter 1, one finds two primary elements: a core or center that is identified as the grand narrative and the subjects or constituents of the ideological system. In the following section I discuss central theoretical issues concerning narrative, causality, cultural frames, self-narrative, and identification.

Narrative, Causality, and Cultural Frames

Definitions of narrative vary according to researchers' perspectives and theoretical orientations. However, common elements of narrative can be identified in existing literature. Herman (2002) defines narrative as the representation of events in a time sequence. Ricoeur (1984) argues that narrative is a condition to and structure of human temporal experiences. "[T]ime becomes human to the extent that it is articulated through a narrative mode, and narrative attains its full meaning when it becomes a condition of temporal existence. (1984, p. 52)" Similarly, Gergen and Gergen (1984) define self-narrative as "the individual's

accounts of the relationship among self-relevant events across time. (p. 255)” Common to these definitions are two distinctive features of narrativity. First, narrative is a form of organization of experiences across time, which is marked by events. Second, the marking events are structured in a sequence or order and thereby are related to render experiences meaningful.

It should be noted that the above definitions highlight narrativity at a textual level. Researchers such as Somers (1992) distinguish two levels of narrativity. At the textual level, a master narrative organizes temporal experiences explicitly in terms of past, present, and future. In social historical discourse, as Somers points out, a conceptual core such as class, society, tradition, and modernity suggest historicity and implicit organization of time and space. Thus narrativity is oftentimes implied at the conceptual level. This is of particular importance to examining grand narrative because, as Lyotard (1991[1979]) and Somers (1992) suggest, grand narrative usually contains in itself de-narrativizing operations that conceals its narrativity so that it appears to be timeless truth.

A question arises from the above discussion. How are events organized into specific narratives, i.e. stories? According to Ricoeur, emplotment is the key to organization of events. Time, with past gone, future to come, and present passing, is captured through the emplotment of events, i.e. rendering events as beginning, middle, and end in a unified and unifying story. Among sociologists, Somers is one of the few that come closest to this point. For Somers (1994), narrative is not merely a subject to be explored. Rather, it is the only perspective that allows sociologists to bring time into a sociological perspective. Somers (1992) further argues that narrativization turns events into episodes and an imposed causal plot “gives significance to independent instances, not their chronological or categorical order.

(p. 600)” Labov (1997) makes a similar argument, which he formulates into a theorem, “Narrative construction requires a personal theory of causality. (p.10)” The significance of Somers’ argument and Labov’s theorem lie in their emphasis on an imposed causal structure that holds event-turned-episodes as a unified story.

It should be noted here that none of the above scholars posits any mode of causality. Trying to link narrative to cultural frames, I resort to Aristotle’s (1984) four modes of causality. These four modes — efficiency, form, material, and purpose — have long been recognized as four fundamental modes of answering and understanding “why” and “how” questions to be asked about any event.

The first Aristotelian mode of causality, efficiency, agrees with the individualistic culture frame in which an event, normally an appearance of a goal, is fully explained in terms of one’s ability (efficient agency). The second mode, form, is very well in accord with the essentialist frame in which an event, normally the fulfillment or failure to fulfill an obligation is explained as indicators of a form understood as a distinctive category. The third and the fourth modes, because of their importance to this analysis, need more discussion.

Material as one mode of causality entails that material is active in the sense that material is a kind of force that strives for a form. Note that here it is the form that is to be explained as an effect of the material. However, material as force attains its form in two ways. First, material can be understood as a negative force, a force that is to be tamed or at least to be adapted to. In this case, form results from reacting and accommodating to the material force. This kind of causality can be seen in cultures that have struggled long against unfavorable natural elements. In this kind of culture or society, social arrangements are understood as necessary to prevent natural disasters from happening. Second, the material

force is ineluctable and the only way to deal with it is to follow its direction that points to a purpose. Thus material causality and teleological causality (Aristotle's third and fourth modes) are merged in one. In this case, the material force is usually seen as positive, moving towards a desired end. Lyotard (1991[1979]) recognizes a fusion of the two modes of causality in Marx's historical materialism. He points out that as a grand narrative, Marxism oscillates between the emancipation of humanity (a purpose) and the speculative spirit (a force). Furthermore, a distinction between agency and the material force needs to be delineated. Agency is a potential, usually associated with an actor (individual, group, institution). This potential is only manifest in the process of achieving certain goals. Different from purpose, goals are optional, one of a number of possible choices. Thus agency is understood as agency for certain goals. Material force is itself, either relentlessly destructive and thus purposeless or inevitably marching towards purposeful end.

Thus it is argued that material causality needs the complementary concept of force that is either purposeless or purposeful. Teleological causality also needs a concept of an entity that bears purpose (e.g. history). It is here that I modify Aristotle's modes of causality. In light of the above discussion, it can be seen that purposeless material force as one mode of causality corresponds to the mutualist frame in which the social system is established as a set of requirements for its adaptation to hostile forces of a material world. The purposeful material force as a mode of causality is one that integrates material and teleological causality, which corresponds to the reformist frame. It is the last mode of causality, I hypothesize, that dominates the Chinese communist grand narrative.

Grand Narrative

Grand narrative has been used as a heuristic concept and a deconstructionist tool. To identify components of grand narrative is usually intertwined with the attempt to de-center a grand narrative (Derrida 1976, Lyotard 1991[1979]). With the deconstructionist approaches, a grand narrative is usually not associated with any specific historical document. Instead, the analysis relies heavily on the author's holistic grasp of an underlying discourse of history supposedly present in a culture or society over a long historical period. For instance Lyotard's (1991[1979]) discussion on the French emancipation narrative does not refer to any specific texts. This, of course, has to do with the assumption that a grand narrative is stable over a long period of time and dominates the totality of the discursive practice in a society or civilization. Scholars like Foucault (1994[1977]) and Dumont (1994) analyze discourses spanning a long period of time, but they never explicitly address how temporality is organized in those discourses.

Sociologists tend to focus on personal stories in order to infer more profound social discourses (Strauss 1995, Maynes 1992, Mason-Schrock 1996, Rommon-Kenan 2002). Thus direct and explicit studies of grand narrative are rare though not without exceptions such as Somers' (1995) study on the discourse of American citizenship and Jacobs' (2001) research on racism and politics. Even in the studies done to address certain type of grand narrative, no formal model has been established. Thus an analytic model has to be designed to systematically tackle texts produced by one regime at certain historical moment.

In this research grand narrative is defined as a (hi)story of a whole community, society, civilization, or even human kind that is unified by one single cause. It can be further argued that the mutualist grand narrative provides a history of a community that has

struggled against “purposeless” and hostile material forces. This type of grand narrative stresses the identity of the community and asserts equality and homogeneity within the community. In contrast, the reformist grand narrative provides a history of a society that is driven by “purposeful” material forces. This type of grand narrative emphasizes the internal differentiation of social groups and classes at different phases of history. Thus social events oftentimes open possibilities of redefining the historical phase a society is undergoing and consequently lead to re-categorization of social groups and classes. Based on the above discussion, one expects that the grand narrative of the Chinese communist ideology is structured in the reformist frame and its mode of causality is teleological-material. Furthermore, the social categories in this grand narrative are usually redefined during large-scale mass movements and redefining social categories or identities functions to provide targets for mass movements.

Forms of Self-Narrative and Identification

Many social scientists see narrative as a discursive strategy employed by social agents to organize and reorganize their experiences (Strauss 1995, Jacobs 2001, 1996). This group of social scientists focuses on one form of narrative, i.e. self-narrative, and its functions in self-formation. This orientation has led to reconsideration of theories and research agendas on self-identity (Harré 1983, Mancuso and Sarbin 1983, Gergen and Gergen 1984, Sewell 1992, Strauss 1995, Mason-Schrock 1996, Rimmon-Kenan 2002,).

According to Harré (1983), self is an effect produced by discursive practice through the use of deixis (or indices) such as “I.” Identities are positions already existent in discourse because discourse itself is a relational process. One’s sense of identity is established through

assuming or being assigned discursive positions in interaction. A similar rendering is at least suggested by Mead's work (1934) nearly 50 years before Harré. Gergen and Gergen (1984) argue that individuals construct their self-narratives using existing cultural narrative forms to organize events in their lives so that they perceive themselves as stable beings. One's self-identity is thus produced through such narrative construction. From this perspective, self-identity is relocated in processes of self-identification in which the individual assumes discursive positions that is organized in a coherent story structured by existent narrative forms. One can further argue that an ideological discourse provides such narrative forms to be utilized by individuals in constructing their self-identities and at the meantime the system produces its desired subjects.

What is needed next are models that can be operationalized to tackle the textual data collected for this research. For my research purpose, two models of narrative are needed to address grand narrative and personal stories respectively. An integrated model that is capable of dealing with both would seem ideal. However, partly due to the nature of the research questions and partly because of the available theoretical and analytical resources, this ideal does not seem to be possible. The study of a grand narrative is usually concerned with causality, the force that holds all historical (past, present, and future) events in a consistent temporal organization. Whereas, the study of personal stories is concerned with specific social actors, identities, relations, and tension or conflict among them, and the ways these conflicts are settled. In the following sections I discuss the theoretical and analytic sources that lead to the establishment of narrative models to be used in analyzing the personal stories sampled from People's Daily.

Actantial Models, Narrative Modes, and Genre

Actantial models in narrative analysis are originally inspired by Propp's formalist story grammar. In an attempt to analyze Russian folktales, Propp (1968 [1928]) proposed thirty-one story functions that are performed by seven actants or roles. The functions include actions such as violation (of a contract), departure (of a hero), struggle, transfiguration, return, and wedding; while the seven roles are the hero, the false hero, the villain, the helper, the sought-for person, the dispatcher, and the donor. The functions are essentially syntactical. A story thus reconstructed is analogous to a sentence with the functions as its grammatical components.

Structuralists like Levi-Strauss (1984 [1963]) and Greimas (1984[1966]) recognize the potential of this approach but indicate that the functions are components of surface structures of the stories and they are sometimes intuitive and naïve. Unlike the formalist, they argue that syntactic forms do not produce meaning and suggest that structuralist analysis start at the semantic level. Based on what is called "the elementary structure of signification", Greimas establishes an actantial model of narrative modes inspired by Levi-Strauss's narrative matrix. Greimas postulates that the elementary structure of signification is the fundamental set of relations in which a basic semantic unit obtains meaning.

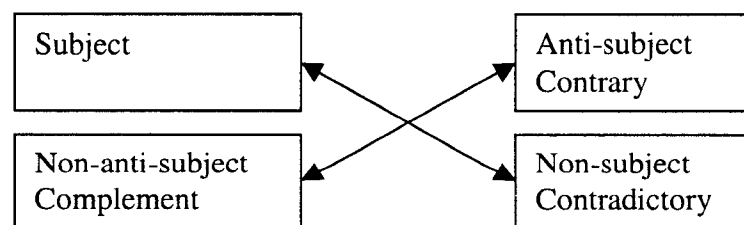


Figure 2.1 Elementary Structure of Signification

For instance, if the first cell in figure 2.1 is taken by a “subject”, then three logically possible relations generate three concepts that are meaningful: the anti-subject, the non-subject, and the non-anti-subject, each of which takes the contrary, the contradictory, and the complementary position in the structure respectively. Greimas’s model of narrative modes is then obtained by imposing different actantial roles in each of the cells.

	<i>Heroic</i>	<i>Agonistic</i>	<i>Synecdochical</i>	<i>Irony</i>
<i>Subject</i>	w	$-x$	$\frac{1}{y}$	$1-z$
<i>Contrary</i>	$-w$	$\frac{1}{x}$	$1-y$	z
<i>Contradictory</i>	$\frac{1}{w}$	$1-x$	y	$-z$
<i>Complementary</i>	$1-w$	x	$-y$	$\frac{1}{z}$

Figure 2.2 Greimas’s Actantial Model of Narrative Modes

The elements of the matrix are read as different actants or narrative roles (Levi-Strauss 1984[1963], Greimas 1984 [1966], Schleifer et al 1992). For instance, if w represents a hero, then $-w$ stand for the contrary of hero, an opponent or villain, $\frac{1}{w}$ is the contradiction of a hero, usually a character to be saved or sought for by the hero. $1-w$ is then the complement of a hero, usually the helper or facilitator. Each of the four columns forms a narrative mode: a focus or perspective of the story and the relations between the subject and other actants. In other words, narrative modes determine whether the center of a story is a hero, a villain, a heroine (understood as the “object” to be saved or sought for by the hero), or

a helper. In a sense, the subjectivity the author assumes determines the narrative mode of a story. The relations between the subject and other actants are then functions of mode.

Greimas labels the four narrative modes in his scheme as heroic, agonistic, synecdochical, and ironic. It should be noted that actual actantial roles are culturally defined. Greimas treats the concretization of actantial roles as an empirical issue.

What a narrative mode establishes is a set of relations among the four actants.

According to Greimas' scheme, the hero's power declines as the modes changes from the heroic to the ironic. For instance, in the agonistic mode, the opponent is almost equally powerful to the hero, in the synecdochical mode the helper is usually the most powerful, and in the ironic mode the opponent overpowers the hero. Thus to construct a specific actantial model for a personal story is to identify the set of social relations perceived by the storyteller, particularly the differentially distributed power among the actants.

Greimas further argues that stories convey cultural values. To address this issue Greimas expand the above model of narrative modes into what he calls basic actantial model of narrative (Figure 2.3).

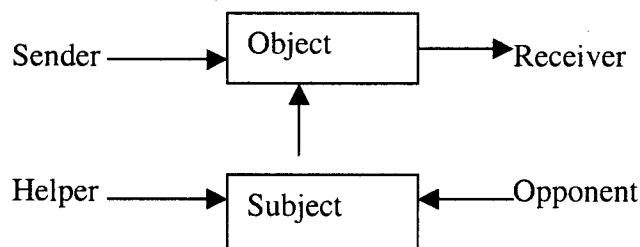


Figure 2.3: Greimas's Basic Actantial Model of Narrative

There are three pairs of actants in this model: subject/object, helper/opponent, and sender/receiver, forming three axes: the project axis, the conflict axis, and the communication axis respectively. It should be noted that a character does not necessarily embody only one actant. For instance, the hero can also be the receiver of messages, help, and reward; the sender can also be a helper. According to Greimas (1984 [1966], 1989), each actant in one pair presupposes the other in the same pair. The first two pairs are internal elements of a narrative. Their relations and interactions establish the central events of a story. The last pair articulates the situation (also see Schleifer et al. 1992) and informs the story of its social and cultural values.

Specifically, Greimas posits that in each narrative mode one internal actant is syncretized with one of the two external actants, most likely the receiver. It is through this syncretization that cultural values are communicated to the reader or an audience. In heroic mode, the hero is usually the receiver of a prize, oftentimes the “object” sought for. The cultural message conveyed is that a hero should be rewarded (e.g. with love, money, power, acknowledgement, etc). In the agonistic mode, the receiver is fused with the helper who is usually a survivor of the struggle between the hero and his opponent. The cultural value conveyed in this mode is communication, namely how we should understand the struggle. The synecdochical mode conveys the value of harmony with the “sought-for-object” syncretized with the receiver. The “object” in classical comedies is usually a heroine (not a female hero) who is eventually awarded a husband as a result of the restored harmony. The ironic mode conveys a sense of meaninglessness. With the defeat of the “hero” she/he is forced to live with his failure, his opponent becomes the receiver of certain prize. Therefore,

irony poses a doubt, a questioning of taken-for-granted cultural values. In a sense, an irony is counter-cultural.

While the model of narrative modes provides a scheme of constructing power relations among the actants, the basic actantial model of narrative offers a scheme for the study of types of action and event in stories. Since Greimas argues that the external actantial roles and their syncretization with internal roles communicate cultural values, the axis of communication deserves special attention.

According to Greimas (1984[1966]) communication occurs in two forms: marking (indicating)-recognition, and inquiry-answering. Note that the sender-receiver is a more fundamental form than these two. In the marking-recognition form, the one who marks (or indicates) is the sender and the one who recognizes is the receiver. Whereas, in the inquiry-answering form, the one who answers is the sender and the one who inquires is the receiver. These two forms depend on how a communicative action is initiated. However, as Roberts (2003) points out, communication does not always occur after initiation. One may refuse to engage in a communication. Furthermore, communication may appear to have occurred but the result is a misunderstanding instead of understanding. This argument can be generated using Greimas' basic signification structure. For instance, if a communication is initiated by a marking, we obtain the scheme shown in Figure 2.4.

In the above scheme, after marking, recognition completes the communicative act; refusal ends the communicative act; and mis-recognition leads to misunderstanding; and non-refusal may either end the communication or lead to further communication.

Marking

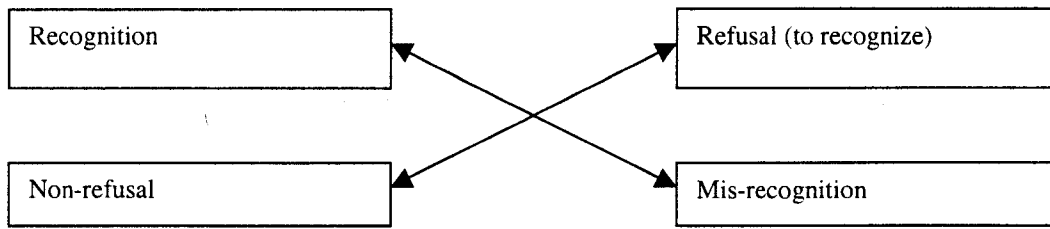


Figure 2.4: Communication Initiated by Marking

A similar scheme can be constructed for communication started with an inquiry. In the following scheme, after inquiry, answering completes the communicative act; refusal ends the communicative act; and mis-answering leads to misunderstanding; and non-refusal may either end the communication or lead to further communication such as clarifying the question.

Inquiry

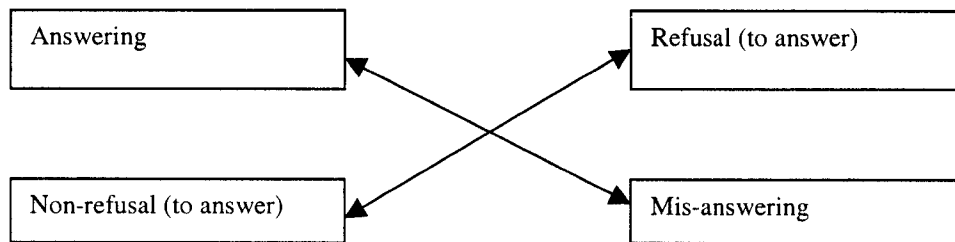


Figure 2.5: Communication Initiated by Inquiry

Moreover, the different manners in which a communication is initiated imply different relations between the interlocutors. For instance, Roberts (2003) argues that marking is usually initiated by an “expert” or “authority”; and inquiry is usually directed to an “expert” or “authority”. The distinction between the “expert” and the “authority” lies in the types of knowledge they embody. In presenting Roberts’ model of cultural frames I discussed two ways of identifying and distinguishing: schematic and processual. For Roberts,

the schematic way corresponds to relational knowledge that addresses relations among concepts. One who embodies such knowledge is an authority. The processual way of identifying and distinguishing corresponds to operational knowledge whose embodiment is seen as an expert. As discussed in chapter 1, the reformist frame depends on schematic (relational) knowledge to make distinctions, we have enough reason to expect that the communicative act recounted in the personal stories would be initiated through marking by an authority.

Narrative Genre

Narrative modes determine the perspectives from which a story is told and to some extent they also determine the ways in which the events in stories unfold. Narrative genre is the formal embodiment of an “external” cultural field represented by the actantial roles of sender and receiver. In other words, narrative genre refers to the form that concretizes the semantic content of narrative modes in a way that reflects cultural values and cultural conventions of resolving conflicts. For instance, a story ends with the hero defeating her/his enemy reflects different cultural values from one that ends with the hero and her/his enemy’s mutual destruction. Moreover, stories end with the hero receiving love or wealth reflect different cultural values.

Therefore, while identifying actantial modes usually leads to the establishment of social relations within which events unfold, identifying narrative genres reveals cultural ways to settle certain situations and the values attributed to the settlements. Greimas avoids offering a scheme to delineate narrative genres based on his actantial model. In fact he cautions the researcher not to over-use the actantial model. He views his narrative model as an open discursive domain that should not be rigidly followed. He notes that, “...to define a

genre only by the number of actants, while setting aside all the contents, is to place the definition at too high a level; to present the actants under the form of a simple inventory, without questioning the possible relationships between them, it is to renounce analysis too early, by leaving the second part of the definition, its specific features, at an insufficient level of formalization.” (Greimas 1984[1966] p.202). Thus a model of narrative genre remains to be established, at a lower level of abstraction and by bring in cultural elements such as cultural frames and values.

Gergen and Gergen’s (1983) narrative model, proposed in a study of autobiography and self-formation, contains two primary narrative genres — progressive and regressive — that generate five secondary narrative genres. A progressive narrative ends with a state that is culturally more valued than the initial state; whereas, a regressive narrative ends with a less valued state. A romance is usually a progressive narrative that tells the story of a struggling hero. However, romance sometimes falls in the category of stability narrative that ends in a state the story starts with. Tragedy is essentially a regressive narrative that ends rapidly and sometimes abruptly in destruction of the protagonist, whereas, comedy-melodrama is a progressive narrative in which happiness is quickly restored. Another issue concerns the Gergens is the direction of the narrative. A happily-ever-after narrative is one that transits from a progression to stability while romantic saga is a never-ending alteration of progression and regression, a constant struggle. One question arises from this relatively simplistic and intuitive model. Do all these narrative forms exist in different cultures? If the answer is yes, then how are they differentially weighted within different cultures?

To answer these questions, a more complex model that allows for its integration with Robert’s model of cultural frames needs to be established. Despite Greimas’ warning,

Schleifer et al. (1992) established an inventory of narrative genres derived from Greimas' model of narrative modes and basic actantial model of narratives. In this research Gergens' notion of tragedy and comedy and Schleifer et al.'s model of narrative genres are synthesized. Moreover, Roberts' model is used as the basic structure to address narrative genres in different cultural frames.

A melodrama, according to Schleifer et al. (1992) is a signification of a series of events that ends with the hero's victory. This genre can only embody one of Greimas' narrative modes, the heroic mode. Tragedy is defined as a signification of a series of events that leads to destruction of both the hero and his opponent. This genre, however, can embody two narrative modes: the heroic and the agonistic. (Note that in the synecdochical mode, neither the hero nor his opponent end in destruction and in the ironic mode the opponent triumphs.) Therefore, heroic and agonistic tragedies are both tragic stories but told with different foci.

Comedy is a story that starts with certain degree of disorder and ends with a restored harmony. It can embody the heroic and the synecdochical modes. Note that the agonistic mode focuses on struggle and opposition instead of harmony and the ironic mode may contain "funny" elements but they are not comedic. Irony is here understood as a narrative genre in which the hero is defeated but not destroyed by her/his opponent. The fact that the hero has to live with her/his failure usually subverts cultural norms and values and challenges the meaningfulness of the social and cultural system. It should be noted that irony as a narrative genre is different from ironic narrative mode, though it only embodies ironic mode as concretized narratives.

Application of the scheme established above to the study of ideology is possible only if the scheme is integrated with the model of cultural frames. Table 3.1 shows such an attempt at integration. Note that this table implies a hypothesis that each cultural frame only allows for certain narrative genres. To fully support such a hypothesis requires a research of much large scale and data of a much broader range. Therefore I only focus on one of the frames that are pertinent to the examination of personal stories sampled from People's Daily, namely, reformist frame.

Table 2.1: Cultural Frames and Narrative Genres

Cultural Frames	Genres					
	Melodrama	Tragedy		Comedy	Irony	
	Melodrama	Heroic	Agonistic	Synecdochical	Ironic	Irony
Individualist	√		√	√	√	
Mutualist		√	√	√		√
Essentialist		√	√	√	√	
Reformist	√	√		√		√

The reformist frame only allows for melodrama, heroic tragedy, synecdochical comedy, and irony. Each of the genres provides a settlement of one of four possible situations regulated by the frame. Because of the clear distinction between “in-group” and “out-group,” the conflict between the two is of primary importance. Two possible between-group situations need settlement. The first is the victory of “us” or one of “us” which is of the genre of melodrama in which a hero triumphs over her/his opponent. Second, the failure of “us” or one of “us” is narrativized by the genre of heroic tragedy. Since the enemy is denied

of her/his subjectivity, the narrative mode is never agonistic. Tragedies such as *Macbeth*, which are centered on a villain or villain in its becoming, do not exist in this frame.

The situation among “us” always needs a happy ending, thus synecdochical comedy performs the task. Irony is the “natural” enemy of this frame if a story narrates events within the system because it is a rejection of the system’s legitimacy. However, the reformist irony is used to narrate events occurring in the “out-group” or the “other system.” In doing so, the irrationality or meaninglessness of the “other” system is exposed, usually in contrast to the meaningfulness of “our” system.

The above discussion suggests a more complex scheme of narrative genre, and hence more complex social interaction patterns than the scheme proposed by Greimas and Schleifer et al. In the analysis of personal stories from *People’s Daily*, one may expect three narrative genres, namely, melodrama, synecdochical comedy, and irony. If the narrator is of an in-group identity, the subject is a hero on his/her way to overcome obstacles and accomplish a task that is part of the group cause. The helper in this scenario is a character from the center of the group or someone whose identity as a group member can never be questioned, usually a powerful figure of the group, who helps strengthen the hero’s will and makes sure the hero is tenacious enough to accomplish the task. In the reformist synecdochical comedy, the story would start with some degree of estrangement of the subject from the in-group. The narrator or subject does not assume the actantial role of a hero. Instead she/he is the sought-for-person. The helper, again from the center of the group and usually a messenger (sender), helps the subject understand the causes of the estrangement. The end result is a return of the subject to the center of the group. In other words, an ambiguous identity is clarified.

The meaning of a hero, opponent, sought-for-person or object, and helper are culturally defined. Simply put, a hero is someone who represents positive values and qualities relative to a culture. A similar rendering applies to the other roles. According to Greimas (1984) only in specific actions the functions of these roles appear. Consequently, one character may embody different actantial roles in different situations. For instance, the helper is oftentimes a sender, and the hero usually becomes a receiver (of the valuable object) at the end of a story.

In summary, the model of narrative genres provides a scheme for identifying ways of settling conflicts. Integrating this model with cultural frames allows for distinguishing cultural differences in resolving conflict. Reformist frame in particular allows for four of the six narrative genres. Since personal stories cannot possibly be tragedies, I expect only three genres to be identified.

Narrative Conflict and Modalities

A story, structured by a set of relations, needs to be enacted by certain conflict or tension. For Greimas (1984), this tension comes from the transfer of the sought-for-object from the opponent to the hero or vice versa. However, many stories do not contain such a transfer. A preliminary examination of the sampled autobiographies for this research shows that a significant number of these personal stories involve some kind of internal change of the subject. Thus, Greimas' model, at least based on the available literature by him, appears inadequate to address my research questions.

Ryan (1984) proposes a model that contains various modal worlds to address the dynamic feature of narratives. A modal world is a discursive domain that prescribes what one "can" "should", "must", "may" "wants to" or "wish to" be or do. For Ryan, all narratives

contain certain types of conflict or tension that drive the storied events to unfold. She conceives narrative conflict as the tension created between and among the modal worlds and the actual worlds. For instance, a story may be centered on the tension between one's own personal goals (a personal intention world) and the moral value world of a community or it may be centered on the conflict between two characters' rights (right-worlds). Ryan's model differs from Greimas' in that the former locates narrative conflicts in the differences between different cultural and social formations while the latter places the tension in the more abstract structure of relations among the actantial roles.

Ryan's model leads further to formulating approaches to the issues of subjectivity, self-identity, and action-orientation. The modal worlds and tensions among them provide the narrator with a cultural repertoire to render her/his experiences intelligible and orient her/him to certain types of action to resolve the conflicts.

In the field of linguistics, modality is understood as "what modifies the predicate" (Greimas and Courtès 1982). In other words, modalities are the elements that modify "being" and "doing" that links a subject to a state (in being) or an object (in doing). Modal verbs (or modal auxiliary verbs) are the primary vehicles to convey such modifications, though modal adverbs play similar roles in many languages. These modal auxiliaries are consensually conceived as of two types: epistemic and deontic, despite various efforts to establish a theory that can unify the two (Groefsema 1995, Sweetser 1986, Greimas 1987). Epistemic modalization conveys the degree of certainty of the speaker about a state while deontic modalization modifies an action that links a factual to a possible world.

Organizing one's experiences through a semiotic system such as language not only entails a temporal structuring of state and events as in narrative but also requires a mapping

among modes of realities. One's actions do not acquire meaning within the domain of themselves. Rather, the distance between the actual world — what is known or believed to be factual — and the possible worlds — what one can or should or must or may do — is the foundation of meaning for actions. In an attempt at understanding narratives in terms of a factual world and various possible worlds, Ryan (1985) proposes a formal scheme to bring modal analysis into narrative studies.

The term modal structure refers to the organization of the possibility or plausibility of the domains of meaning in the stories. Note the difference between Greimas's narrative mode and Ryan's modal structure. Ryan (1985) devises a set of rules that generate a formal scheme of "worlds" or domains of meaning. The primary distinction she makes is between the author's world and the character's world. Ryan's scheme assumes that the reader and the author share the same narrative global universe. The global universe is further divided into a profane world and a sacred world. The profane world includes a factual domain in which everything is unquestionably real and an actualizable domain, which is a plausible extension of the factual. In opposition to the profane world is the sacred world that is always actual. According to Ryan, the character's world comprises of the following domains. The knowledge-world (K-world) includes the aspects of the world that the character knows and believes to be true.

The intention-world (the I-world) is the goal domain a character aspires to achieve by following a course of action. The elements of this world come from three model (note, not modal) worlds. The first model world is the wish-world (the W-world). This world contains a set of wishes of states and actions that the character ranks along a continuum of "good" and "bad" in accord with his or her value system. The world of moral values (the M-world) is

similar to the wish world in that they both have a ranking continuum of “good” and “bad”. Different from the W-world, the M-world “specifies what characters consider good or bad for all the members of a specific group. (1985, p. 729)” The third world, the obligation world (the O-world), is similar to the M-world in that it contains a set of ranked states and actions along a continuum of good and bad. It differs from the M-world in that the values come from the group of which the character is a member. It is “a contract binding him to the group. (1985, p. 729)” The reason why the I-world is not included in the model world is unclear. It seems that Ryan thinks that the intention world is not an autonomous domain because it has to be informed by a value domain. However, excluding the I-world from the model world is an operational switch from the character’s world to the researcher’s world. It can be argued that in the individualistic cultural frame, personal intentions are autonomous for the character in the sense that they can serve as ultimate justifications for one’s action. It is when one shifts from the character’s position to a researcher’s position that one may argue that those intentions depend on the worlds of moral values, obligation, or rights.

One problem arises from asserting the I-world as one of the model worlds. What distinguishes the I-world from the W-world? The answer is: nothing significant. Ryan (1985) states clearly that the wish world is a private domain since the valuing is in reference to the character. The only underlying difference implied by Ryan is the connection between intention and action and the disconnection between wish and action. Since a discussion on intentionality, causality, and action is beyond the scope of this paper, I would only argue that the difference between the I-world and the W-world is semantically in degree not in kind. Therefore, in the following analysis, the I-world is conceptually merged with the W-world and redefined as a model world, still labeled as the I-world.

Another complication in Ryan's modal structure is his conceptualization of the obligation world. Ryan's obligations are of two types: obligations and permissions/prohibitions. This ambivalence is obvious in his elaboration of this world by resorting to the so-called deontic system that is presented as follows:

"P is prohibited
 P is allowed
 P is obligatory
 P is rewarded" (Ryan 1985, p. 729)

The above deontic system contains a set of obligations understood as expectations of an interpersonal nature and a set of prohibitions/permissions that imply the existence of a power or authority. Forming an analytical scheme, I propose to split this world into two relatively autonomous worlds: the obligation world (the O-world) and the right world (the R-world). In the O-world not fulfilling an obligation results in holding back of a reward; whereas, in the R-world violation of a prohibition results in punishment. This operation agrees with the model of cultural frames, which ensures consistency in analysis. Therefore, I use the following analytical scheme when analyzing the modal structure of the personal stories and editorials from the People's Daily:

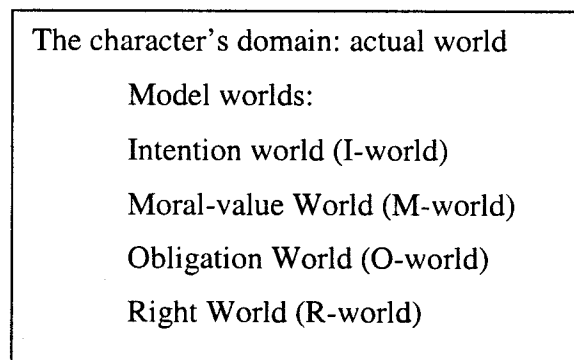


Figure 2.6: Modality and Modal Domains

It should be noted that the above conceptual scheme is a reduction and modification of Ryan's "general system" since his system includes the author's domains. Since in the personal stories to be analyzed the author is always syncretized with a character, Ryan's model is reduced by excluding the author's domains. The above scheme focuses on the character/author and the worlds she/he depicts from which her/his actions and action-orientations are inferred in their own terms.

Roberts (2002) proposes four types of modality in correspondence to his model of cultural frames. Except for obligation, permission, and requirement he includes ability as one modality. He believes that sufficient empirical evidence shows that people, in particular, Americans do rationalize their action in term of what they can do. As a result, he uses the four English modal auxiliary verbs, can, may, should and must, as semantic indices of the four modalities. He argues that these are the four and only four types of modality assuming all actions have only four consequences: to make something (valued) appear, to make something (unvalued) disappear, to prevent something (valued) from disappearing, and to prevent something (unvalued) from appearing. The first type of action corresponds to the "can" modality and his individualistic frame. This type of action is ultimately justified by the statement, "because I can." The second type of action rationalization corresponds to the "may" modality. Action is ultimately justified by the statement "because I may". In the reformist frame, what is brought into focus by this modality is in fact the opposite of permission, forbiddance. Oftentimes an action is carried out as an instance of forbidding or making unvalued things disappear. It can be seen that the above two actantial modalities concern the intention world and the right world.

The “should” modality modifies actions that link an actual world to an obligation world. This modality differs from the permission modality in that it presupposes interpersonal relations instead of a power (of a group). Finally, the “must” modality corresponds to a moral value world, the M-world. Actions are rationalized in terms of one’s requirements of or responsibilities for the welfare of a community. Different from the permission modality, however, the individual determines whether to fulfill his/her responsibility to the community. In their consequences, significant violation of a permission or forbiddance leads to severe punishment, whereas failure to fulfill one’s responsibility leads to excommunication.

It should be noted that with the “right” modality “what is right” and “one’s right” are fused. In other words, one’s right is always “what is right.” “what is right” is the ultimate justification of “one’s rights.” This is not to say that within other cultural frames people do not justify their actions in terms of “what is right.” Instead, within the other frames “what is right” can be further justified in terms of one’s ability, obligations, and requirements. In the reformist frames, a further question of “why is it right” is inappropriate. Thus in my analysis the “right” modality is identified according to whether or not the ultimate justification of an action is its “righteousness.”

Table 2.2: Cultural Frames and Actantial Modalities

Cultural Frames	Modalities of Action and Being
	Actual world: Epistemic modality
Individualistic	Intention-world: “can” modality
Mutualist	Moral-Value world: “must” modality
Essentialist	Obligation-world: “should” modality
Reformist	Right-world: “may” modality

The correspondence between cultural frames and narrative modalities is tabulated in Table 2.2. To borrow a term from Greimas (1984[1966]), the four types of modalities of action are termed as actantial modality. In a sense, the distinction between epistemic and actantial modalities corresponds to the distinction between assumptions of objectivity and subjectivity and the distinction between explanation and understanding (interpretation). With epistemic modals, one assumes there is a reality “out there” and assesses the reality in terms of necessity, sufficiency, possibility, and impossibility. Actantial modalities exist in a subjective domain. Instead of evaluating truth-values of a reality, these modalities are employed to attribute meaning to one’s actions, states, and emotions. Moreover, these modalities agree perfectly with the model of cultural frames (Roberts 2003). This is shown in the Table 2.2.

In Greimas’s actantial scheme, the tension or conflict of the story inheres in the relations among the actants. Therefore the tension is a “formal” tension, not a specific tension. In a sense, Greimas’s model leaves open the question “what is the specific driving force of a story?” In Ryan’s scheme, however, the driving force of a story can be derived from the conflict or tension between or among the actual and model worlds. According to Ryan (1985), conflicts are defined in terms of relations among the worlds at four levels. At the primary level, conflicts are results of the distance between the actual world and the model worlds in the forms of unachieved goal, unsatisfied moral values, unfulfilled obligations, and unmet justices. At the second level, conflicts come from the incompatibility between the character’s model worlds. In other words, the satisfaction of one world requires the non-satisfaction of another. For instance, to achieve a personal goal requires that one ignore her/his obligation to

another person. At the third level, conflicts arise due to the internal inconsistency or unclear boundary of a model world or worlds. Ryan notes that many postmodernist stories and novels are about individuals who struggle for a coherent and consistent identity. Finally, at the fourth level, conflicts are found “whenever the realization of one of the worlds of a character’s domain presupposes the non-satisfaction of the corresponding world in another character’s domain. (1985, p.735)” Since conflicts of some type are inevitable in narratives, each possible type of conflict at the above four levels implies a driving force with which events can be organized into stories.

Table 2.3 is a tabulation of all possible conflicts at all four levels. Of course, the combination of two or more conflicts leads to more complicated narrative plots and the number of possible combinations appears to be huge. Thus, I do not attempt to offer a discussion on narratives of multiple conflicts and complex narrative structures. Instead, I focus on the possibilities of single-conflict narratives. This is sufficient since all personal stories sampled contain much fewer events than most short stories; and, multiple-conflicts, though exist, are rare.

Table 2.3: Possible Narrative Conflicts

First Level	A character’s actual world vs. her/his model-worlds: 4 possible types of conflicts
Second Level	Between a character’s model worlds: 6 possible types of conflicts
Third Level	Within a character’s model worlds: 4 possible types of conflicts
Fourth Level	One Character’s model worlds vs. another character’s model worlds: 16 possible types of conflicts

In general, the analytic scheme established above allows for examination of types of conflict in the narratives. Specific to this research, this scheme enables me to explore, at least

in part, the question, “In what ways has the Chinese communist regime posited traditional Chinese culture as its ‘other’?” If the traditional Chinese primary cultural frame is recognized as essentialist, in which one’s identities are mostly defined in terms of interpersonal relations such as those between family members, friends, and relatives, then one may expect that there exist narrative conflicts that oppose a “right” world to an “obligation” world.

Action, Intention, and Modalities

Actions occur in social relations. Weber was one of the earliest to propose a theory of social action. His four types of rationality are essentially four ways of assigning meanings to one’s action. However, Weber’s (1978 [1922]) focus was on the actor not the relations. Ricoeur (1991) distinguishes two types of understanding of action: causation and intention. He argues that “human order is in-between in which we constantly move, comparing our less rational and more rational motives, evaluating them relatively, submitting them to a scale of references, and finally using them as practical premises in practical reasoning” (1991, p. 134). It should be noted that for Ricoeur, the “constant move” is a switch from one discursive strategy to another in understanding actions. Ricoeur also suggests that a causal understanding of action excludes intentions and motives while intentional understanding of action locates the origin of action in a subject. Relevant to this research is the latter type of action understanding because it links action directly to a subject. In this research I define action-orientation as the discursive elements that justify actions in terms of intentions.

Bruner (1990) argues that to understand man, “you must understand how his experiences and his acts are shaped by his intentional states” and the forms of these intentional states are “realized only through participation in the symbolic systems of the

culture”(p.33). This argument has two layers. First, intentions, as the starting point and justification of action, are only meaningful in a cultural system. Thus the ultimate location of personal intentions is the cultural system not the individual. As Harré and Gillet (1994) argue, the traditional understanding of intentionality views human beings as machines driven by internal forces. This view cannot explain why individuals sometimes do things they prefer not to do and withdraw from actions they have already committed to. They further argue that intentionality is a reasoning mechanism that is regulated by the “prescriptive norms and discursive validations”. People learn these normative rules to make sense of their engaging in and disengaging from actions. Through participating in a cultural system, one “learns” to have certain types of intention and subjectivity.

Second, the cultural system provides the fundamental modes of intentions. Herman and Kempen (1993) relate personal psychological motives to basic “themes” at the collective level and discover through a series of study of personal narratives that people employ the existent cultural themes of motives to bring coherence to their account of their personal experiences. In a study of the motivation of Armenian terrorists, Tötölyan (1989) opposes the argument that the terrorists are irrational and psychotic individuals. He argues that the terrorists are human beings “socially produced, out of a specific cultural context” (p.99). In his research he focuses on the Armenian narratives that center on a lost empire, a lost glorious past and argues that these terrorists are “new heroes” produced for old stories. His research suggests that stories provide patterns of intentions and motivations for action. Only are the acts meaning in relation to the stories, they also constitute those actions as well.

Moreover, in traditional social psychological discourse concepts such as intention, motivation, motive, and desire are differentiated. For instance, motive and motivation are

understood as being stimulated by external factors while intention and desire are inner driving forces. Furthermore, motivation and intention are usually linked to materialized actions and used to refer to mental states that are more stable than motives and desires, which are fleeting and do not necessarily lead to action. However, for the constructionist these concepts all suggest various discursive strategies to be employed in “talking about” and “accounting for” materialized and possible actions.

Although most of the theorists discussed above suggested the existence of cultural forms of intention or cultural themes as foundations of intentionality, no model of intention forms was proposed in their writings. However, the discussion on Ryan’s (1985) model worlds and modalities suggested four types of intention: goals, moral values, obligations, and rights. Each form of intention bridges a gap between the actual world and a model world. Action, as the bridging act, is modalized in terms of the modality type of the model world.

Roberts and Wang (2003) propose model of personhood based on the four cultural frames discussed in chapter 1. In individualistic frame a person is read as an agent and her/his actions are understood as sufficiently caused by the agent her/himself and social relations are viewed as resources of the actor. In the mutualist frames, a person is read as a collaborator whose actions are understood in relation to a community or other social systems. Instead of an autonomous actor, the collaborator’s actions are not self-sufficient and are rationalized as communal requirements. In the essentialist frame a person is read as a persona that is presented through the person’s performance. Actions are understood in this frame as expressions or representations of one’s nature and the nature associated with each persona is understood in terms of the social relations in which the person is embedded, i.e. a set of obligations. The final type of personhood is the devotee whose actions are read as for the

interests of the group to which she/he belongs. In this frame, those whose actions are perceived as against the group interests are read as opponents who belong to the “other” group.

It can be observed that the above model is a synthesis of Roberts’s cultural frames and Ryan’s model worlds. In this research I expect to show that the Chinese communist ideology regulate its subject’s intentionality primarily in terms of rights. In other words, actions are proposed because it is the right thing to do.

Emotions and Actions

The sociological study of emotion is currently divided into two camps. The essentialist position posits that emotions are psycho-physiological processes in response to interactions between a human organism and changes in its position within a social structure. For example, according to Kemper (1981) “different outcomes in power and status relations instigate different physiological processes, which are in turn related to different emotions. (p. 339)” Accordingly, the essentialist perspective treats emotions as reactions to changes in social structure — reactions of a universal nature, given their grounding in the essential physical makeup of the human body.

Unlike the essentialist, the constructionist transposes emotion into the domain of discourse and discursive practice. Hermans and Kempen (1993) indicate that emotion has a narrative structure in that an emotion is always an emotion in a situation. Emotions do not stand alone. Hochschild’s study on emotion work (1979) suggests that “feeling rules” are constitutive of emotions in that they not only convey what emotion is appropriate in which situation, but also play a role in the instigation of emotions and emotion management. For

Harré and Gillet (1994), emotions are feelings and displays that are embodied expressions of judgment and, in many cases, comprise social acts that influence others. Wang and Roberts' study on the emotion *Schadenfreude* (2002) suggests that emotional patterns oftentimes rely on a narrative, a history that contains characters with which the individual can identify or disidentify. Therefore, emotions are rule-governed acts in reaction to certain situations that are oftentimes understood in relation to a narrative.

Lyons (1980) notes that emotions are often used to justify certain behavior as either rational or natural. Certain behaviors are often perceived as accompanied by emotions. For instance, in Western societies the action of embracing one's lover is seen as a natural act that is attributed to the emotion of love. However, the connection of embracing one's lover and the emotion of love is at least not as "natural" and "closely causal" in some other cultures. Different cultures not only posit different behavior-emotion links but also ways of displaying emotions or emotional behaviors.

Lyons also indicates that emotions are oftentimes seen as providing motives. He notes that emotions as motives are usually mediated by "desires". In other words, certain emotions are not directly linked to actions. They give rise to certain desires that serve as motives. What is of relevance to this research is the discursive transformations of emotions into actions that is provided in the Chinese communist ideological system. As Lyons cautions, I am not trying to establish a causal link between emotions and actions. Instead, I view emotion-action transformation as discursive strategies with which we account for our actions. One question remains to be answered, "What emotions are more likely to be discursively transformed into actions?"

Kerby (1991) points out that our understanding of emotional states is governed by cultural rules. According to these rules, certain emotions are perceived as problems that need resolution. This concurs with Hochschild's (1979) argument that we manage our emotions according to a set of cultural rules on appropriateness and inappropriateness. In light of Roberts's model of cultural frames, one can further argue that within different cultural frames emotions, especially emotions perceived as problems are managed differently. This argument is twofold. First, some emotions are more prominent in certain cultural frames than in others. For instance, frustration appears to be more prominent in individualistic frame than in mutualist frame. Hatred is primarily an emotion within reformist frame because its clear distinction between friends and enemies. Second, because emotions are differentially distributed within different cultural frames, resolutions of problematic emotions also vary. Take anger for example. Within individualistic frame, anger is more likely to be understood as residing in the individual and thus techniques are developed to manage this negative emotion, which is evidenced by the various anger management therapies in the U.S. In contrast, within reformist frame anger oftentimes calls for revenge. In this frame, anger is perceived as caused by external factors such as the enemy's violation of "our" right. Thus, resolution of this problematic emotion needs actions that avenge the injustice done to "us." Applying this argument to the study of emotion-action transformation in the Chinese communist ideology, I expect to identify a set of problematic or negative emotions that are transformable into actions or elements of actions.

It should be noted that the discursive link between emotions and actions are not always explicit. In situations where emotions are not understood as transformable they usually either enhance or undermine actions. For instance, excitement may heighten the level

of intensity of one's action; whereas, sadness may cripple one from acting. What is of interest is the discursive pattern in the Chinese communist ideology that organizes emotional displays and the degrees of one's commitment to actions. Degree of commitment to an action can be conceptualized as how strongly an action is modalized. For example, within reformist frame, the "right" modality can be graded in terms of "determination," "want," and "hope." Note that this gradation occurs within one modality. In other words, these are strategies of modalizing actions in degree not in kind. Thus we can expect that actions proposed in conjunction with emotional displays be more or less strongly modalized in accordance with a set of cultural rules. .

Furthermore, because of the clear distinction between friend and enemy in reformist frame, the enemy is usually perceived as of no subjectivity or of morally lesser subjectivity. Thus we can expect that this contempt in perceiving one's enemy leads to less strong modalization if the proposed actions are one against one's enemies.

In this chapter I have discussed the constructionist endeavor to relocate sociological and social-psychological studies from an ontologically realist domain to the domain of discourse. With this relocation, the importance and relevance of texts to this research are highlighted and narratives are brought into perspective as major cultural forms with which subjectivity and self-identity are formed. A theoretical model of grand narrative is established based on Aristotle's four modes of causality, Therborn's model of ideology types, Robert's model of cultural frames, and Labov's temporal analysis. Moreover, three narrative models — model of narrative modes, basic actantial model of narratives, and model of narrative modalities — are constructed to address the research questions on self-identity formation. Finally, I discussed relevant theoretical arguments on action-orientation and

emotion-action transformation. Before this chapter ends, I would like to stress that in this study of the Chinese communist grand narrative, I do not intend to appraise the truth-value of the ideas or to evaluate how it distorts reality. Instead, I focus on the ways meanings are structured in its discursive practice. In other words, my emphasis is on the structure of the ideology as an autonomous system.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH DESIGN: NARRATIVE ANALYSIS AND SEMANTIC ANALYSIS

In this chapter I discuss my research design with a focus on analytic procedures. The texts analyzed are sampled from People's Daily, the sole communist party official newspaper run by the Ministry of Propaganda. These texts are of three types: government pronouncements, personal stories, and editorials written by individuals in reaction to events. As mentioned in the previous chapters, the grand narrative of an ideological system provides an organization of time and historical events in conjunction with a single causal force that holds all events together. The autobiographies are productions by the subject in the process of identifying itself with the system. Action orientation and emotional patterns located in these texts are interpreted as results of this process of identifying and as responses to the call of the ideological system. Three analytic schemes are designed to handle each type of data. Temporal narrative analysis is a modification of Labov's (1997) approach to the analysis of orally-told stories. With modification, this approach can be employed to identify narrative constants and temporal shifts and to construct the causal chains on the semantic plane. Actantial narrative analysis (Greimas 1984) is integrated with narrative analysis of modality (Ryan 1985) and this synthesized approach is applied to the analysis of personal stories. Semantic analysis with a focus on modality is conducted to obtain a data matrix. This data matrix contains encoded semantic relations concerning emotions, modality of action, event type, and types of actant and object. This data set is analyzed in chapter 6 to test hypotheses concerning action orientation and emotional patterns.

Temporal Narrative Analysis and Grand Narrative

Data

One feature of a totalitarian regime is its “eventful” history. This, as Arendt argues (1951), is due to its conception of history as movement. Events are required to sustain a sense of movement. The discursive construction of events by the official media, like People’s Daily, provides a rich source of data that would shed light on the ways in which such a sense of movement is signified. Furthermore, the signification space created through the construction of events also contains identities with which the subjects of the system can identify or disidentify. Therefore, a first step towards understanding the Chinese communist ideological system is to reconstruct the structure of its grand narrative: its organization of time through the interpretation of events, and its positioning of social identities in a discursive history.

To address the above research questions, I choose to analyze government pronouncements published in People’s Daily in the form of editorials. It was a common practice that the Chinese central government published these pronouncements in pseudonyms and sometimes in the name of the People’s Daily’s board of editors. These pronouncements were usually framed as either a call to act or the government’s stance in reaction to certain events. Since formal documents were usually distributed through channels within the communist party, these pronouncements were normally perceived as calls for action made to the whole population. In most cases the event(s) in question and the actions proposed were positioned within a large historical discourse. In this section of the study two events that occurred during the first 27 years of the Chinese communist regime were selected. These events are the anti-rightist movement and the initial stages of culture revolution, both of which had far-reaching impacts on the Chinese society.

The anti-rightist movement was the first large-scale ideological movement in the first 27 years of Mao's communist regime. It was an ideological movement not only because its targets were intellectuals (literally in Chinese, "men of knowledge") but also because its purpose was "thought reformation" throughout the whole society. At the time when the anti-rightist movement was initiated (summer 1957), the communist regime had consolidated its power through a series of military and police actions. The previous movements (from 1950 to 1956) such as extermination of counter-revolutionaries, movements against the three-vices and later the five-vices, started with clearly defined targets. During these movements, people were identified by their acts (e.g. military actions against the communist forces, officials' embezzlement and squandering of public properties, and illegal activities to sabotage the new economic order). The anti-rightist movement, however, was the first aimed at a group of people because of their speech (i.e. because of what they said and how they said it). Moreover, throughout the first seven years of this regime, a residue from the nationalist semi-democratic system (1911-1949) was kept untouched, namely the democratic parties. As a promise from the communists during wartimes, members of these parties had taken governmental positions. Throughout this half-year long movement, the communist government published a series of pronouncements in People's Daily to define social categories and to provide classificatory methods for distinguishing "us" from "them." These pronouncements also provided directions in which the movement should be steered. It was through anti-rightist movement that the communist regime managed to get rid of those disobedient members of the democratic parties and put the rest under its full control. It was also in this movement that the discursive boundaries, logic, and strategies of the communist

ideological system were solidly established. However, it was the Cultural Revolution that pushed the discursive practice governed by the game rules to its perfection.

It is almost a consensus among Chinese scholars that the Cultural Revolution (1966-1976) is the historical event that had the most profound impact on the Chinese society. Not only did the tentacles of this movement reach almost every corner of the society, it was also a movement that aimed at subverting almost all traditional Chinese customs and values. When the Cultural Revolution was initiated, a whole new generation had been “mastered” (a term from People’s Daily) by this ideology and Mao trusted the power of this ideology to such an extent that he only dropped a few hints at some crucial moments, his Red Guards would know what to do next. This was coined into a slogan during the Cultural Revolution: “Wherever Chairman points, we Red Guards will fight there.”

The causes of Cultural Revolution are complex. I will not attempt at offering any speculations. However, it is pertinent to mention that the social situation in 1966 was very different from that in 1957. The targets of Cultural Revolution included not only intellectuals but also government officials who were communist party members. Without violating its own logic, the ideological system played an important role in legitimating actions against people who were previously defined as “insiders.” In a sense, the stability of the fundamental structure of such an ideological system dictated the instability of its categorization scheme.

Although the ten-year movement had its twists and turns, the initial stages were the most violent, intensive, and charged with fanaticism and cruelty. The initial stages were marked by the Red Guards’ smashing street signs and savaging stores that were perceived as the “four olds” (i.e. old ideas, old culture, old habits, old customs) in urban areas, and later by their invasion into rural China. In pronouncements published in 1966, the purpose of the

Cultural Revolution was defined and targets of this movement were specified. Thus in this research I focus on the pronouncements published at the beginning of the Cultural Revolution (i.e. June 1966 to August 1966), when the Red Guards' legitimacy was officially acknowledged.

The sample of texts analyzed to answer questions concerning grand narrative includes three pronouncements on each of the two above-mentioned events. The three pronouncements on each event were respectively selected at the beginning, the middle and the end stages of the events. Another criterion used to sample these pronouncements is that the texts should either define the nature of the movement, point out directions of the movement, or provide categorization schemes based on which members of society are regrouped. Three out of 20 government pronouncements were selected on the anti-rightist movement and 3 out of 22 were selected on the Cultural Revolution. In the following section I present a temporal narrative analysis that is devised to address grand narrative.

Methods and Hypotheses

The analytic scheme established for the analysis of grand narrative is based on Labov's (1997) analytic procedure for analyzing orally told stories. Although Labov does not address the idea of a grand narrative, his approach provides a framework within which grand narratives can be tackled.

Labov explains his analytic approach by referring to an initial question "How did that happen?" He suggests that an event E_0 makes sense as the narrator traces a series of previous events E_1, E_2, \dots, E_n , until the question is rendered inappropriate. Of the series of events, each is an efficient cause of the next one. The approach taken in this research is to analyze the

discursive constructions and interpretations of “events.” An event is defined as an interruption (sometimes disruption) of the “normal” unfolding of life.

Labov’s analytic scheme also provides ways of identifying semantic units of narrative. Of particular use is his definition of an *abstract*. “An abstract is an initial clause in a narrative that reports the entire sequence of events of the narrative” (1997, p. 17). In a sense, an abstract is a constant whose truth value holds unchanged throughout the whole narrative. A constant could be a past event that serves as background information for the fore-grounded events or a causal factor that plays into the materialization of the event(s) being signified. Thus identifying these abstracts or narrative constants (as is termed in this research) is one way to tease out elements of a grand narrative. The first step in the analysis of grand narrative is then to identify sentences that hold true as perceived by the author(s) no matter whether the “current” event being discussed occurs or not. Unlike Labov’s approach, the second step is to exclude sentences that describe preceding events. The remaining textual elements are then expected to be narrative constants that hold events together. With this approach I intend to support the following hypotheses:

Hypothesis 1: *The causality of the Chinese communist ideology is of the material-teleological mode and thus is organized in accordance with a reformist frame.*

Hypothesis 2: *A scheme of historical phases exists in this ideology that is established based on the material-teleological cause.*

In each of the pronouncements, various social identities are discussed and relations among them posited. What is of interest for this analysis are the relations of those identities to narrative constants, particularly to the “purposeful” force and the historical phases defined in term of the force. Hence, the next step is to identify the social identities or categories in the

sampled texts and their semantic relations to the narrative constants. In doing so I intend to test the following hypothesis.

Hypothesis 3: *Social categories or identities are defined in terms of their relations to the purposeful causal force and the historical defined by it.*

According to Greimas's elementary structure of signification, four possible relations exist between a social actor and the causal force: the facilitator, the unfacilitator, the non-facilitator, and the non-unfacilitator. For clarity and avoidance of awkwardness in terminology, I use the terms devotee and opponent to refer to the facilitator and the unfacilitator respectively, and ambiguous identities to refer to the non-devotee and the non-opponent. It is argued in chapters 1 and 2 that a grand narrative in accordance with a reformist frame contains two semantically oppositional concept sets that are used to distinguish among members of the society. This leads to the next hypothesis.

Hypothesize 4: *The Chinese communist ideology contains two clearly defined oppositional sets of social identities: devotee and opponent.*

It should be noted that the social identities are identified semantically. However, syntactic features also provide cues for identification. For example, most "devotees" occur as subjects in sentences and clauses; whereas, opponents are more likely to occur as objects. Furthermore, the category sets for devotees and opponents have a core of stable identities across events while the ambiguous category sets change from movement to movement.

Actantial Analysis, Autobiographies, and Identification

Data

To examine discursive strategies of self-identity formation in the Chinese communist ideology, I analyze a sample of personal stories published in People's Daily during the second half of 1974. This period is chosen because, first, personal stories were more prevalent then than in later years. Second, this is a time when the Cultural Revolution was approaching its end and the structures of this type of writings in People Daily had matured (or crystallized) into an almost ritualized form. In fact, a quick reading of some personal stories available in 1957 shows that the modes of narrative were still in formation at the time in that the stories dealt almost exclusively with a single type of content, namely suffering and salvation. By 1974 a new generation had grown up under the communists. Their voices and the ways in which their voices had been structured by the official ideology are of great importance and relevance to my analysis. Moreover, 1974 was a relatively uneventful year compared with preceding and ensuing periods. During such times more than a few topics were permitted in People's Daily, rendering the personal stories somewhat more diverse.

The sample for this analysis consists of the corpus of texts comprising the population of personal stories published in the People's Daily during the period from July 1st to December 31st, 1974. The stories are identified based on the criterion that they all contain an account of at least one concrete event the author had experienced. Texts containing general autobiographical information do not qualify as personal stories and were thus excluded from this analysis. Twenty-six personal stories were identified and analyzed based on the models established in chapter 2.

Methods and Hypotheses

The first analytical step is to identify the internal and external actantial roles in the story. Actantial models proposed by Greimas (1984[1966], 1977) provide analytical and generative schemes based on the semantic relations among narrative roles or actants. Identification of narrative modes is simplified by the fact that the authors are always subjects of the stories. Then the position of the subject is identified in accord with the functions she/he performs in the event. For instance, if the subject is portrayed as someone who overcomes obstacles in accomplishing a mission, she/he takes the hero's position and the story takes on a heroic mode. If the event leads to a troubled situation that the subject is unable to disentangle her/himself from, then the subject assumes the sought-for-person position and the story is takes on a synecdochical mode. Within this step the three action axes, if any exist, are also identified.

The next step is to identify the genre of a story. This step is made easy by the identification of narrative mode and its correspondence to the cultural frames. Normally, if the story is in a heroic mode, it is then a melodrama. If the story is in a synecdochical mode it is then a synecdochical comedy. It should be noted that this entailment does not render the identification of narrative genre redundant because narrative genres are determined by the ways in which conflicts are resolved. The correspondence between narrative modes and genres only holds within a cultural frame. The predictability results from the theoretical model established above.

The third step is to identify the tension of driving force in a story based on the modified model of narrative modalities. On the project axis, narrative tension can be identified in terms of characteristics of the obstacles. On the communication axis conflict can

be identified in terms of the information gap, i.e. what message is conveyed to and recognized by the subject. Furthermore, on the conflict axis the identities of the parties involved in the conflict provide cues for the identification of narrative tension.

To analyze personal stories following the above steps I intend to test the following hypotheses that are derived from the theoretical models of narrative modes and genres. In the models established in chapter 2, it is shown that reformist frame only allows for three narrative modes: heroic, synecdochical, and ironic; and four narrative genres: melodrama, heroic tragedy, synecdochical comedy, and irony. It is also established that narrative mode reveal the author-perceived social relations, especially power relations. Moreover, the settlements of narrative conflict (i.e. choice of narrative genre) entail a syncretization of one internal actant with an external actant, which reflects cultural values and norms.

Hypothesis 1: *The personal stories are of three and only three narrative modes, i.e. heroic, synecdochical, and ironic.*

Hypothesis 2: *In synecdochical comedies, most events occur on the communication axis because of syncretization of a powerful helper and the external actantial role of sender.*

I also expect to identify cases, in which traditional Chinese cultural values are opposed to the Chinese communist ideological system as narrative conflict between two modalities.

Actantial Modality and Action Orientation

Data

As discussed in the previous chapter, an ideological system not only provides frames and means to organize one's experience, it also orients its subjects toward certain actions. To

examine the action orientation of the Chinese communist ideological system and the emotional patterns it produces, I choose to examine editorials written by individuals and groups of individuals that were published in People's Daily. An editorial is here defined as a text that expresses personal opinions about a current event and contains at least one sentence that is a proposal of an action or actions with respect to the event. Editorials are sampled from People's Daily on four events that cover a period of 19 years (from 1957 to 1976). These four events are chosen not only because all of them had profound impacts on the Chinese society but also because they are of four types according to the following scheme. In chapter 2, an event is defined as an interruption of the normal unfolding of life process. This interruption can be framed either as an interruption of a state or an ongoing process. One can further postulate that the state and the process can be either culturally valued or unvalued. Thus the four types of events are interruptions of an unvalued state, a valued state, an unvalued process, and a valued process.

A similar event typology can be derived from Greimas' basic structure of signification. Assuming the Chinese communist ideology is in a reformist frame in which actions are understood in term of rights, we then obtain the following typology:

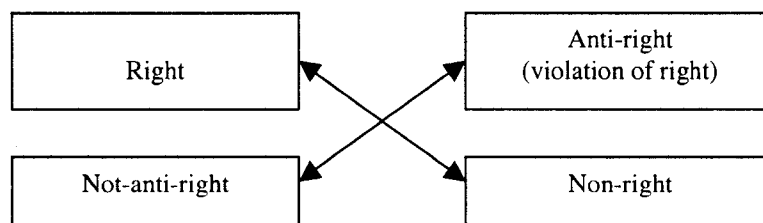


Figure 3.1: Event Typology within Reformist Frame

According to the above scheme, events in reformist frame can be perceived in four different ways: asserting our rights, violation of our right by an opponent, mistaking a non-right for a right, and action as non-violation of a right. These four perceptions correspond to the four types of event mentioned above. The correspondence is shown in Table 3.1.

The first event chosen is the anti-rightist movement discussed above. Suffice it to stress here that the intellectual and democratic party members' criticism of the communist system was initially permitted during the time period from late 1956 to early summer in 1957. Thus the anti-rightist movement was framed as an action to stop an unvalued process during which some members of the society mistook non-rights for their rights.

Table3.1: Event Types

Initial State or process	Events (State or Process)
Process unvalued (Mistaking non-right for right)	Anti-rightist movement (Rightist attack on the system)
State unvalued (“Our” suppressed rights are reasserted)	Red Guards’ actions (Domination of the capitalist liners)
Process valued (Soviet’s violation of our rights)	Sino-Soviet war (1969) (Soviet’s invasion)
State Valued (Great loss: non-agentic event)	Mao’s Death (Great achievements under the leadership of Mao)

Cultural revolution was framed differently from the anti-rightist movement. The Great-Leap in 1958 that led to three years of severe famine and at least 20 million deaths in rural China had forced Mao to retreat to the “secondary line” of the party, more or less a party token. The communist bureaucrats had been in the front of policy making until early 1966. Early signs of Cultural Revolution included the criticism of literary works written by some official/writers. The criticism was soon extended to the whole ministry of culture. By early summer of 1966, similar criticism had penetrated into the ministry of education and

some major universities. Thus in the official pronouncements on the Cultural Revolution, the situation in China was described as a domination of the revisionist and bourgeois bureaucrats in many areas of social life, an unvalued state in which rights of revolutionary masses had been suppressed.

By 1969, the Cultural Revolution entered its third year. The situation in China was framed as continually deepening of the revolution in various areas of social life, i.e. a valued process. The conflicts along the Sino-Soviet borders then were perceived as an interruption of this valued process, an blatant violation of “our” sacred rights.

The situation of China in 1976 was framed within People's Daily as a time when great achievements had been harvested thanks to the ten-year Cultural Revolution. Early in 1976 a poem by Mao was published that described the situation as “nightingales singing and swallows dancing.” Mao's death came as an odd event to most Chinese since for 27 years the Mainland Chinese had been chanting, “Long live Chairman Mao” (literally meaning Chairman Mao will live for ten thousand years) and Mao's death seemed remote, if possible at all. Thus, Mao's death was framed a disruption of a valued state. However, Mao's death was caused by natural agent and thus fell in the category of non-anti-right since no social actor played any role in the event.

With the above four events chosen, editorials were sampled. As a consequence the routine workings of the communist propaganda machine, People's Daily provides a convenient sampling frame: editorials on an event during the time period when they were permitted to be published. Usually, the policy of the communist regime and thus the policy of People's Daily only allowed editorials to be published during certain period of time. In a sense, an event would last as long as the People's Daily permitted it to be discussed.

Normally, a government pronouncement would tell the population that something had happened, marking the start of the event. Two cues in the newspaper are used to determine the time period during which editorials are sampled. First, if a government pronouncement was published on a new event, then editorials on an “old” event would completely disappear. This is the case with the initial events of the Cultural Revolution and Mao’s death. Editorials in response to the Red Guards’ actions in cities stopped after a government pronouncement to redirect their action toward rural China. Editorials on Mao’s death disappeared as soon as a government pronouncement declared the central government’s decision to build Mao’s Memorial on Tien’anmen Square, which was framed as a happy event. Mourning was immediately replaced by joyful cheers. Second, editorials in reaction to an event were replaced by analyses of the causes of the event. In these analyses no actions were proposed and thus they did qualify for editorials. This is the case with the Sino-Soviet war. Three weeks after the event was publicized, analyses completely replaced editorials. Using these two cues, a time period is first determined and all the editorials are included in the sample. In fact, the sampled texts on the three events discussed above are the populations of all editorials in response to the events.

A complicated case was the anti-rightist movement. During this half-year long movement, editorials appeared almost every day. In fact, 107 editorials were published during the first month (June 22, 1957 to July 21, 1957), which exceeds (by 20 editorials) the largest sub-sample of the three other events. Thus a sample was drawn. Tallying the numbers of editorials published every day during the first month, I discover that editorials were concentrated during the period from July 5th to July 14th, 1957. After this period no more than three editorials were published each day. This counting allows me to determine a time period

and to sample editorials whose number is very close to the size of the largest sample mentioned above.

Sample size and sub-sample size are provided in the following table.

Table 3.2: Sample and Sub-Sample of Editorials

Events	Anti-rightist Movement	Cultural Revolution	Sino-Soviet War	Mao's Death	Total
Sub-sample	84	31	87	79	281

After the editorials were sampled, the sentence closest to the end of each editorial that contains a proposed action is selected. A proposed action is here defined as a sentence or phrase that indicates an action to be taken by a certain member or members of a society. For instance, “We are determined to follow Chairman Mao’s revolutionary line” is a proposed action in that it indicates an action to be taken by “us”, namely in-group members. The modality of the action is then identified by reading the rest of the text and identifying the rationale provided in the text for the intended action. For instance, the most likely rationale for the above-proposed action is, “because history has proven that Chairman Mao’s revolutionary line is the only right line.” Furthermore, within the “right” modality, each action modalization is further categorized in terms of its strength. Strength of modalization is here defined as the degree to which the actor (i.e. the subject of the proposed action) is committed to the action. For instance, a determination is a stronger modalization than an intention. An intention is stronger than a hope. Then, each sentence selected in the first step is semantically analyzed into subject, action, and object or state, which are encoded to obtain a data matrix.

Similar steps are taken to collect data on emotions. A sentence closest to the beginning of an editorial that contains an expression of emotion(s) is selected. Then the whole text is read to locate a sentence that explicitly posits an emotion-action transformation. Then the emotion(s) and the action that the emotion is transformed into are encoded.

Using categorical data analysis techniques to establish associations among actantial modalities, types of subject, types of object or state, types of event in question, types of emotions and emotion-action transformation, I intend to test the following hypotheses. Hypotheses 1 and 4 can be directly derived from the theoretical arguments discussed in chapter 2. Hypothesis 2 is proposed to test the existence of People's Daily's underlying author selection policy. The remaining hypotheses are based on the constructionist's argument that an action is always an action from a position (i.e. an identity) (Harré and Gillet 1994, Hermans and Kempen 1993). One would expect that strong action modalization expresses the centrality of one's social identity. Links between emotions and actions are discursive features that social actors use to render a situation comprehensible and that provide directions for further actions (Gergen 1994).

Hypothesis 1: *Actions in Chinese communist ideology are primarily modalized in terms of rights.*

Hypothesis 2: *Actions proposed during times of crisis (interruption of valued state or process) such as Mao's death and the Sino-soviet war are more strongly modalized than actions proposed during the other two events (Interruption of unvalued state or process).*

Hypothesis 3: *People of stable in-group identities such as workers, poor peasants, and People's Liberation Army soldiers are more likely to use stronger modalization than people of other identities.*

Hypothesis 4: *Only negative emotions such as anger and hatred are discursively transformable into actions.*

Hypothesis 5: *People of stable in-group identities are more likely to propose transformable emotions than people of other identities.*

Hypothesis 6: *Actions associated with emotional transformation are more strongly modalized.*

Hypothesis 7: *Actions directed to enemies and people of ambiguous identities are less strongly modalized than actions taken within the group.*

In this chapter I discussed analytical strategies used in the examination of grand narrative, personal stories, action-orientation, and emotions. Hypotheses associated with each section are provided. It should be noted that in the first two sections, qualitative analyses are to be conducted. Hypotheses are to be supported in terms of compatibility between data and the proposed analytical models. In the last section, qualitative data are analyzed quantitatively to test the proposed hypotheses.

CHAPTER 4

STRUGGLES AND MOVEMENTS: THE GRAND NARRATIVE

*“The history of all hitherto existing society is the history of class struggle.”
(The Communist Manifesto -- Marx and Engels, 1978[1848])*

“Time has Begun!” --Hu Feng, People’s Daily, 1949

The second quote is the title of a poem published in People’s Daily on October 1st 1949, the day after Mao pronounced the birth of People’s Republic of China. Six years later, the poet found himself in prison after having been accused of being anti-communist-party and anti-Mao. After spending over 20 years in prison, the poet, like many “intellectuals” of his age, still denied the accusation. Nevertheless, the title of his poem has a ring of accuracy. Time had begun at that moment on that fateful day in 1949, not only in the sense that a new age had started but also in the sense that an alternative temporal was for the first time being imposed on Chinese society.

In this chapter I examine the core of the Chinese communist ideological system, its grand narrative. Ricoeur (1984) describes narrative as a condition of temporal experience. Different from many linguists and literary analysts, Ricoeur here posits narrative as the ontology of time. In other words, time attains its being through a certain narrative mode. In this view, narrative is a necessary condition for time — for our experiences of and in time.

It was argued in chapter 2 that grand narrative, defined as a (hi)story of a whole community, society, civilization, or even human kind that is unified by one single cause, is only possible in two of the four cultural frames: the mutualist and the reformist. In this chapter, a modified analytic procedure (Labov 1997) is applied to the texts of government pronouncements on two events. The purpose of this is to reconstruct the structure of the

Chinese communist grand narrative. This structure contains a concept of history as forward movement driven by an inner contradiction, a scheme of historical phases mapped to a specific society, and discursive strategies of categorizing social actors during struggles within these phases. The traditional Chinese cultural frame and its historical narrative style are then discussed to establish the Chinese communist ideology 's cultural "other" or antithesis. Comparison and contrast between the two cultural systems show that the structure of the communist ideology differs fundamentally from the traditional cultural frame and its forms of historical narrative. Contrary to the commonly held argument that the emergence of modern totalitarianism in China was facilitated by its cultural heritage (Korchak 1994), this analysis shows that the communist ideological system is alien to traditional Chinese society at least in terms of its conception of social actors and historical discourse.

Grand Narrative of the Chinese Communist Ideology

Narrative Constants

As discussed in chapter 3, narrative constants are those statements in a narrative that hold true throughout the story. In other words, constants are elements whose truth-values do not depend on the sequencing of events. In the pronouncements analyzed here most of the constants are statements that posit a fundamental cause to the events in question. This fundamental cause is consistently termed as "history".

Quote 1: *"History moves forward in struggle. People's thoughts move forward through debate."*

(People's Daily, June 22nd, 1957)

Quote 2: *History moves forward.*

(People's Daily, September 15th, 1957)

According to Luhmann's (1999) systems theory, the primary distinction drawn within an ideology (i.e. its very first signifying operation), establishes its discursive domain. For the Chinese communist ideology, this first concept is history. Anything that is nonhistory is left on the other side of this distinction, rendering it meaningless. Discourse then proceeds on the asserted side of the distinction. With this discursive operation, the initial point of a field of meaning is established.

The second discursive operation is to claim that "history moves," which is to say that an unmoving history is meaningless. This claim also conceives history as a force, an immanent force that is the defining characteristic of history. The third operation involves a claim that "history moves forward"—a concept that calls for at least two specific points (or events). Once time is understood as moving from an inferior point toward a superior one a semantic field is established for mapping conduct into a concrete pragmatic field.

The fourth discursive operation gives history a form, namely as struggle. Thus, the forward moving quality of history has an immanent cause. Yet, like "forwardness", "struggle" opens possibilities of further signification. Struggle implies a contradiction, which is rendered meaningful after a thesis and antithesis are introduced into the discourse.

Quote 3: *What is counter-revolution? Revolution and counter-revolution are two tendencies in contradiction/struggle. Being counter-revolutionary is moving against the direction of historical development. History moves forward. Revolution is in accordance with the direction of historical development to determinedly break old systems and develop a new system. Going against the direction of historical*

development, stubbornly defending the old system before the new system is established and doing damage to the new system after it is established and pulling society backwards, that is counter-revolution.

(People's Daily, September 15th, 1957)

In this paragraph, two concepts are introduced into the discourse to attribute specific meaning to the concept “struggle.” These two concepts are revolution and counter-revolution, which are defined by linking them into the forward-moving conception. These two sides of the struggle are defined respectively as moving with and moving against the direction of historical development. Here a tautology emerges, however. History moves forward because of the struggling parties and the parties struggle because history moves forward. Two strategies are usually taken to account for this circularity. One strategy is to philosophize the tautology, claiming that this is the inherent nature of movement as in Hegelian and Marxist dialectic philosophy. Another strategy is to acknowledge the tautology arguing that any semiotic (discursive) system contains such self-referentiality. From the above quotes one can see that the former strategy is adopted in the Chinese communist ideology since the second strategy distances a semiotic system from its claimed “reality.”

It should be emphasized that different ideological components are emphasized in different situations. For example, the forwardness of history is stressed during the anti-rightist movement, whereas struggle was the focus during Cultural Revolution.

Quote 4: *All things exist in the midst of contradiction, struggle, and change. A cardinal point of Marxism, Leninism, and Mao-Zedong Thoughts is the will for criticism, struggle, and revolution. Struggle is life, if one does not struggle (against one's opponent), (one's opponent) will struggle against you. If one loses*

revolutionary vigilance and does not struggle relentlessly against class enemies and class aliens, one is not a Marxist.

(People's Daily, July 17th, 1966)

Quote 5: *The more victories we win in the various frontlines of socialism, the more our socialist cause is consolidated and developed, the more prominent are the contradictions and conflicts between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie. This is why Proletariat Cultural Revolution is on top of our agenda. This is (determined by) objective law. It is impossible to try to avoid such contradictions and conflicts. Proletariat, if they intend to win the final victory, has to be always ready to counter-attack any challenge from the bourgeoisie in the ideological field.*

(People's Daily, July 17th, 1966)

In the first quote, conflict is conceived as inevitable, independent from one's will or intention. This axiomatic type of statement can also be seen in the pronouncements issued during anti-rightist movement. This law-like form creates a sense of having-no-choice. Every act takes sides in the conflict. The second quote posits the way in which the conflict intensifies. On one hand, this is an answer to the question, "Why do we need Cultural Revolution if we have made great achievements?" On the other hand, it is a strategy to sustain the logical consistency of the discourse. Note that here Cultural Revolution is conceived as inevitable and determined by objective law. The "why-do-we-need" question mentioned above is essentially a question about necessity.

At this point the constants within the Chinese communist ideological system have been established. "Play" within this discursive domain requires (at least tacit) agreement

regarding the semantics these constants entail. Questioning these semantics could only be done in accordance with a different discursive system, a new domain of meaning.

Causality

The domain established by the narrative constants that comprise “forward-moving history” can be mapped onto a concrete domain, the social. In the definition of revolution and counter-revolution, two new terms have been added: new and old (social) systems (see Quote 3). First, with this distinction the forwardness of history acquires its reference since it can now be used to index two points along a temporal dimension suggested by “old” and “new” social systems. Second, through a metaphor of “pulling society backwards,” (Quote 3) a sense of history being a force and the old system being a constraint is created. Furthermore its opposition is also suggested, namely forward-moving history. Third, two actors are implied once old and new social systems are linked to the narrative constants: the facilitator and the impeder of historical movement.

In *The Origins of Totalitarianism* Arendt (1951) indicated that totalitarian ideological discourses are characteristic of “lawfulness.” For example, German Nazi ideology relied on an evolutionary theoretical frame and various “anthropological sciences” of races. Soviet communist ideology had a core of Marxian historical materialism that had achieved the status of universal truth. Both had a few simple assumptions and follow clear logical derivation of further propositions. Arendt also noted that both ideologies posit history as a form of motion. The Chinese communist ideology is no exception. However, for the Nazi’s, actions obtain meaning in terms of struggle to restore a past glory; whereas an imagined future end or purpose, a communist utopia has been the ultimate reference for the Soviet and Chinese communists.

Thus the causal force that holds events in the Chinese communist grand narrative has two aspects. One is suggested in the above discussion, namely the immanent struggle within the conception of history. The other aspect involves a claim that history will eventually achieves its highest form, namely, communism. The primary strategy to assert this highest historical form is to postulate a progressive trajectory of history marked by various phases.

A review of the events that mark various historical phases is present in all government pronouncements issued at the initial stages of ideological and mass movements such as the anti-rightist movement and the Cultural Revolution. By positing phases using certain events as markers, the forward movement of history is made specific. More importantly, the ongoing situation and proposed actions can be framed in relation to a larger historical discourse.

Quote 6: *Therefore, in different historical periods, there are different specific criteria to distinguish revolution from counter-revolution. During the fall of feudalism and the rise of capitalism, bourgeoisie, who opposed feudalism and developed capitalism, was the progressive class. During the decline of capitalism and the rise of socialism, bourgeoisie, who defended capitalism and opposed socialism, became a counter-revolutionary class. During the Chinese neo-democratic revolution (1911-1949, according to the Chinese communist definition) China needed to free herself from the old system of semi-feudalism and semi-colonialism. That was the objective requirement of history. ... Today, in a period of socialist revolution ...the direction of China's movement is to complete socialist revolution.*

(People's Daily, September 15th, 1957)

In the above quote, concepts such as feudalism, capitalism, and socialism are used without elaboration because the meanings of these terms had become mundane. According to Lyotard (1991[1979]), a grand narrative contains an unquestionable ontological claim. Here the ontology of history takes effect, with its signifying operations such as positing historical phases and highlighting historical events.

Another strategy is to suggest the communist utopia by encouraging the in-group people to develop “communist thinking”.

Quote 7: *We, all communist party members, revolutionary cadres, people who support socialist system and proletariat dictatorship, ought to... develop communist (way of) thinking, raise our communist self-consciousness, and establish communist aspiration. ... In so doing, we will be able to march invincibly during this new phase of socialist revolution (Cultural Revolution).*

(People's Daily, July 17th, 1966)

It is worth mentioning that by 1966 the urban population, especially the younger generation, had been inculcated with the basics of Marx's historical materialism through weekly political study sessions and required courses such “politics” and “philosophy.” Thus, such quote was understood not only as describing a scheme of historical phases but also suggesting the inevitability of a future communist society. The causality of the historical movement is not understood merely in terms of inherent struggle but also as a teleological progression.

Social Categories and Instability of Identities

By positing historical phases and defining revolution and counter-revolution as one's affiliation with historical forces, the basis of a categorization scheme is established. In the

discussion of narrative constants it was suggested that in the forward movement of history one only has two choices: going with or against this movement. The imposition of historical phases, especially the opposition of the new to the old social system, concretizes the sense of movement and also provides a basic mechanism with which social categories are officially established. In principle, anyone who is a facilitator of the historical movement is “progressive” and thus an ally, and anyone who is an impeder is by definition “regressive” and an enemy. In practice, categorization depends on the historical phases in which the categorizing operation is applied. For instance, traditionally an archetype of violence, cruelty, and trickery, the first emperor of China, Shi’huandi, was categorized by the Chinese communists as a progressive hero because he allegedly dismantled the slavery system and represented the then-progressive class, the landlords. In contrast, as the traditional embodiment of morality, intellectuality, and perseverance, Confucius was depicted as a regressive character. Despite his god-like status in traditional Chinese societies, he was portrayed as a clown who was ignorant enough to go against the tides of history, and a maniac who single-mindedly tried to restore slavery.

Social categories are thus defined in terms of the posited historical phases, narrative constants identified above. Although the shifts of historical phases in this grand narrative are usually marked by ceremonial events such as Mao’s declaration of the birth of People’s Republic of China on the Gate of Heavenly Peace (Tien’anmen), the distinctive feature of a historical phase is a social form such as feudalism and capitalism. Another feature of the scheme of historical phases is its exhaustiveness. No period in history is left out. For instance, China, according to this historical scheme, similar to Western societies, had undergone slavery, feudalism, capitalism (though not fully fledged and short) and socialism.

Though historical events are used as markers for temporal shifts, each of the historical phases is signified by a term that describes a social system. With this maneuver, events become secondary in the sense that what holds the historical narrative is a totalizing concept of historical movement stages of which are delineated by social forms instead of historical events. Events are only comprehensible in reference to imposed discourse about the evolution of social forms. Moreover, defining historical phases in terms of social forms (i.e. relations) allows for positing social categories in accordance with the specific social forms.

In the categorization schemes provided by the ideological system, social categories normally fall into two clearly incompatible sets. However, in schemes designed for mass movements there are always categories that are ambiguous. People of these ambiguous categories usually become the targets of the officially initiated movements.

The following figure are obtained from the government pronouncements issued during the anti-rightist movement.

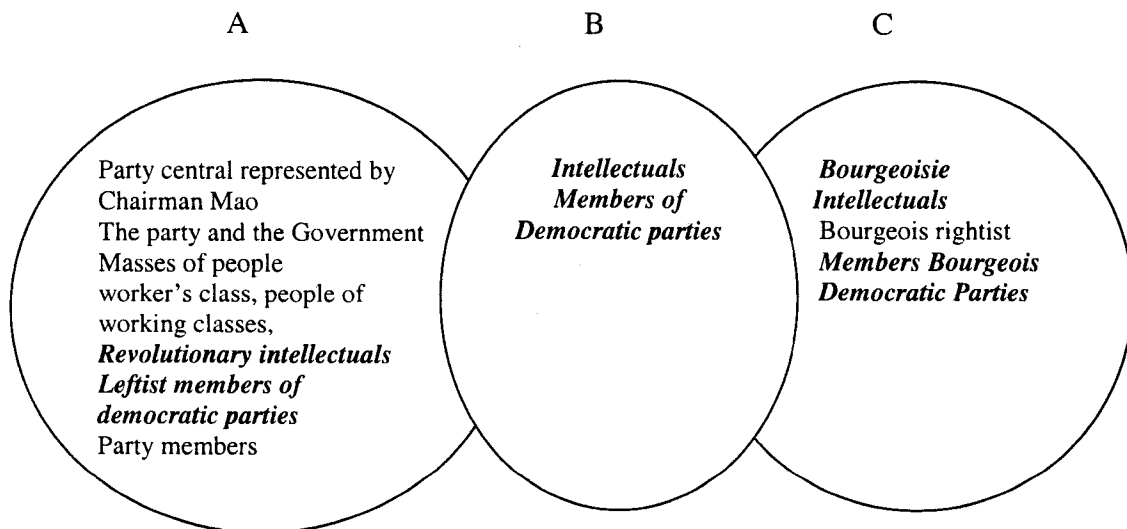


Figure 4.1: Categorization Scheme of Anti-Rightist Movement

A and C are two incompatible category sets, each of which contains unambiguous categories such as communist party members, members of the youth league, and the worker's class in set A and bourgeois rightists in set C. Two categories appear to be ambiguous since the core concepts (i.e. the nouns) are contained in both set A and set C. The categories of intellectuals and members of democratic parties appear in both sets. However, a modifier is used to further define each term. The modifiers such as "revolutionary", "leftist", "bourgeois" function to practically place in either camp people who fall into the categories of intellectuals and democratic party members. Individuals of ambiguous identities (i.e. concepts in set B) such as intellectuals and democratic party members present a need for clarification because of the binary opposition in the facilitator-imperder scheme. People of such ambiguous identities are thus posed as the target of mass movements.

Moreover, each of the historical phases can be internally divided into further sub-phases called periods. This subdivision creates a discursive space within which social categories specific to the historical periods can be posited. For example, the following bullets summarize five periods undergone during the Chinese socialist reform (as reported in the July 17th 1966 pronouncement from the People's Daily).

- Early 1950s: Exposed the vices of capitalism
- Mid-1950s: Socialist reformation of ownership
- 1957: Crushed the bourgeois rightists' conspiracy to seize power
- 1958-1963: Defeated the attempt of the rightist opportunists within the communist party to restore capitalist system
- 1963-1966: Socialist education movement

The historical periods are either defined by the establishment of certain type of social form or a victory over an enemy. More importantly, such division opens a space where the current event, namely Cultural Revolution can be located: as a new phase of socialist revolution.

Quote 8: *However, (despite all the accomplishments and victories) the bourgeois world outlook is deeply rooted in old intellectuals. They are still closely interrelated with the foundations of the old system. Their accepting proletariat world outlook is a transformation of mind, an extremely painful process. It is not easily done.*

In the minds of the old intellectuals, when the proletariat world outlook has not conquered them, the pre-existing bourgeois world outlook, old bourgeois ideas, old habits continue to dominate and attempt to exert influence. They always attempt to reform the world in accordance with the world outlook of the landlords and capitalists.

(People's Daily, July 17th, 1966)

The new phase is always aimed at a new victory—a conquering of the enemy. However, the Cultural Revolution is a movement that tries to conquer minds. In the above quote, minds are categorized into two types: the old and the new. Minds are depicted metaphorically as a territory to be conquered. It is worth mentioning that a war metaphor is probably the most frequently used in most of the pronouncements. For instance, in each of the two movements, the whole society was depicted as composed of various frontlines. Other war-images include “troops of the working class,” “attack and counter-attack,” “allies,” “victories,” “surrender,” “resistance,” and “challenge.”

More importantly, conceiving the Cultural Revolution as a new period of socialist revolution allows for a re-categorization of members of the society. The following figures obtained from the pronouncements on the Cultural Revolution shows that certain in-group identities in 1957 are now ambiguous.

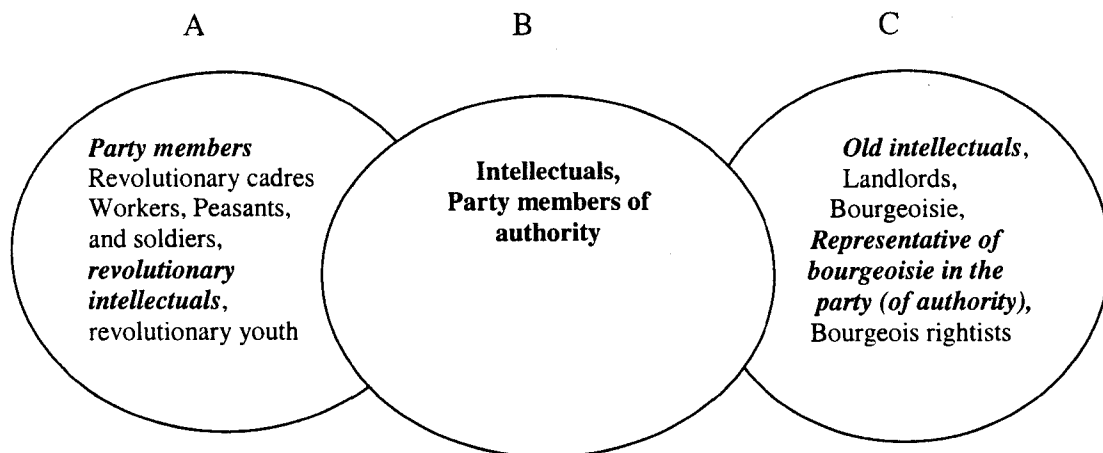


Figure 4.2: Categorization Scheme in Cultural Revolution

This figure differs from the previous one in that it places communist party members of certain authority in the ambiguous category set. Cultural Revolution is known to be a mass movement Mao used to purge the party. Thus not surprisingly party members, especially party members in various positions of authority, needed to realign their affiliation. It can also be observed that labels such as bourgeois rightists appear in the scheme too. In fact, any label used to categorize enemies in a previous movement would appear in a categorization scheme in later movement, consistently placed in the enemy category.

In fact, similar re-categorization occurred in 1957 during the anti-rightist movement. The following quote shows that intellectuals and democratic party members were “allies”

before the communists took power in 1949. It was through positing a new historical period that these people were re-categorized.

Quote 9: *During China's neo-democratic revolution period, China needed to free itself from semi-feudalism and semi-colonialism and to establish a new democratic system. During this period, ...the nationalist bourgeoisie (a category that included bourgeois intellectuals and members of various democratic parties existing at the time of the nationalist government) was a class of a dual nature: it could be sympathetic with and even be a part of the revolution against imperialism, feudalism, and bureaucratic capitalism to a certain extent at a certain stage; that was its revolutionary side. (On the other hand) It was afraid of the basic elements of the revolution, namely, workers and peasants, it did not have the courage to oppose the enemies of the revolution; this was its compromising side. Today, during the socialist revolution period, what then is the criterion to distinguish revolution from counter-revolution? China's direction of movement at this point is toward a thoroughly complete socialist revolution. Therefore, opposing the capitalist line (literally, road) and supporting the cause of socialist revolution and construction is pushing the society, and thus the revolution, forward. Adhering to the capitalist line, being hostile toward and doing damage to the causes of socialist revolution and construction is counter-revolution. Today, workers, poor peasants and revolutionary intellectuals are the main forces of revolution and those anti-socialist bourgeois rightists are the counter-revolutionaries.*

(People's Daily, September 15th, 1957)

In this quote, modern Chinese history is divided into two periods: a neo-democratic revolution the purpose of which was to rid China of an old system, and a socialist revolution the goal of which was to construct a new one. Despite their “dual nature” described in the above quote, members of democratic parties and bourgeois intellectuals who were assigned governmental positions in the communist regime, had all been regarded as allies previously. In the above pronouncement, the instability of the criteria of classifying revolutionaries and counter-revolutionaries is linked to the changing historical period. Thus, the social categories in the communist ideological system are not stable. The instability is justified resorting to the movement of history. Bourgeois intellectuals, the basis of those democratic parties, who were allies during the neo-democratic revolution, became enemies in the anti-rightist movement, the very enemy the movement was meant to destroy. The instability of categories offered the most unexpected enemy for the Cultural Revolution: communist party members, particularly those in positions of authority, who were normally those “tested” party members who had struggled and sacrificed for the communist cause.

In summary, the Chinese communist ideology is centered on a unified history that moves forward. The driving force of the movement is conceived as struggle. The forward movement is concretized by a sequence of exhaustive historical phases that are marked by certain social arrangements. Each of the historical phases can be further divided in terms of specific historical events. Specific to each historical phase or sub-phase, social categories are established and used to classify all members of the society into two opposing sets. Social movements and political campaigns usually start with an ambiguous set of categories that provides the target of action.

Traditional Chinese Culture and Communist Ideology

In the following section, I first provide a somewhat sketchy picture of traditional Chinese society based on anthropological and sociological works by Chinese and American scholars. These works cover anthropological, social, psychological, and historical aspects of traditional Chinese society, which I believe, is sufficient as basis for comparative purposes. Then I compare the communist grand narrative with traditional Chinese cultural ways of viewing the world and themselves. The purpose of this comparison is to demonstrate how the Chinese communist ideology and the traditional Chinese world outlook are founded on two different cultural frames. The communist ideology is shown to be a subversion and disruption of traditional Chinese culture in that it redefines traditional social and cultural categories in an oppositional instead of a compatible manner. Moreover, it also destabilizes traditional social and cultural categories by positioning them in a forward moving history. Finally, I characterize traditional Chinese historical narratives to demonstrate that there did not exist a totalized and totalizing grand narrative in Chinese historical writings. The communist form of historical discourse is shown to be alien to traditional Chinese societies.

In his well-known anthropological work *From the Soil*, a book banned by the communist government for over 30 years, Fei (1992 [1947]) characterizes traditional Chinese society according to a differential association model. Fei uses a spatial metaphor in describing his model. “In Chinese society, the most important relationships—kinship — are similar to the concentric circles formed when a stone is thrown into a lake.” (1992, p. 63) According to Fei, the ego is at the center of this kinship network. A system of notation referring to the elements of such a network is commonly held. Each category in this system is used to identify a specific person by the centered self. In the inner most circle are the

immediate family members and then the ripples extend via marital links to relatives, friends, neighbors, and colleagues. Each person in this order is differentiated from others in terms of closeness to or distance from the center. To the Chinese, the order of kinship is the fundamental order of man, termed Ren-Lun (or man-order). In fact, the etymological origin of the word Lun means, “the order existing in ripples of water.” Therefore, for the Chinese a man of Ren (a benevolent man) is one who, first of all, exemplifies a good son, father, husband, and brother by conforming to Li (rituals) that govern the interactions between the self and other members of the immediate family. Once one satisfies this prerequisite, it is natural for one to “push” or extend this order to farther circles of one’s network. Thus the Chinese person is located at the center of a social network the interaction within which are governed by the principle of closeness and distance.

The manner of interaction depends on the intersection among one’s identities of (entailed by one’s relations to) the people regarding a specific situation. Because one’s identities are differentiated, one’s manner of interaction differs accordingly. Fei cites the *Book of Rites* in support of this observation. “Toward the intimate, there is only intimacy; toward the respected, there is only respect; toward superiors, only deference; between men and women, only differences; these are things people can not alter.” Fei suggests that once they have established such a comfortable network, the Chinese would be extremely reluctant to move, since in situations where one’s identities are not clearly defined one would be at a loss as how to interact with people.

Therefore, traditional Chinese social categories or identities are defined based on such a network, a set of relations, and thus in complementary instead of oppositional terms. Sets of identities are viewed as permanent features constituting the natural order of men. In the

communist ideological frame, however, two sets of social categories are defined in oppositional terms and within each set the categories are basically discrete—allowing only relations of alliance or “friendship.” Relations of oppositional categories are always ones of opponents or “enemies.”

Another anthropologist, Hsu (1981), supports Fei’s observation about traditional Chinese society. Furthermore, Hsu’s work provides new insights into the ways the Chinese deal with their own identities and identity-changes. Hsu writes that the Chinese man of accomplishment has to return to his hometown, his origin, to make his achievement complete, to “shine among, and share his success with those who are related to him.” (1981, p.168)” As Hsu points out, for the successful Chinese man, his relations with his folks do not change because of his success. However, it is only in his primary network that his success is appreciated. On the one hand, this suggests the constancy of one’s network—the permanence of one’s identity in kind among her/his original community. On the other hand, it also suggests that one’s identity does change in degree. Only people who are familiar with the kind of one’s identities would recognize changes in degree. In fact, because the entire primary social network is accredited with the ego’s accomplishment (though differentially according to one’s closeness to the hero) ranking of the whole primary network is raised relative to other networks.

Thus, the Chinese person’s identity is determined by one’s relations to a primary group of people. His identity is constant in kind because the relations are understood as natural human order that is unalterable. Ranking occurs within an identity and identity-change occurs in degree.

The communist ideology differs fundamentally from this conception of self-identity. In the communist ideological frame, not only do social identities change among historical phases, such change is always categorically (i.e. never in degree). With the discursively imposed shift of each historical phase, one's identity is brought into question. Moreover, if an identity changes, it changes categorically from one set to another, but not in degree. Oftentimes, especially at the initiation of a political campaign, some people's identities become ambiguous, which is rare in the traditional frame. In the traditional Chinese cultural frame, one's acts normally lead to assessment within an identity but very rarely to ambiguity regarding identity itself, and even more rarely to identity change. For instance, an emperor is always the emperor although he could be a good or bad one.

Based on Roberts' (2003) model of cultural frames and the above discussion, traditional Chinese culture is primarily of an essentialist frame. In this frame, an individual is understood as an essence—an unalterable category or identity, manifested through a presented persona that “is ontologically linked to her/his social situation. (2003. p. 9)” However, the Chinese communist ideological frame is reformist, in that a person is perceived as either a devotee to a group or an “other.” In Therborn's (1980) scheme, the form of ideology in the traditional Chinese culture is of the positional-existential type that locates an individual in a social hierarchy and the location acquires the sense of nature; whereas, the communist ideology is of the positional-historical type in which a person's position in the society depends on the history of a group or community.

Another comparison is conducted in terms of organization of time. It is clear that the communist ideology offers a totalizing and totalized history for the entire nation of China. A single cause (i.e. class struggle) is used to characterize history. Eight major dynastic shifts

and tens of minor ones are all unified into one social form: a feudalist society. Major historical events were all interpreted in terms of progressiveness or regressiveness. Complex historical plots are all simplified into the struggle of two opposing parties. Such a totalized history did not exist in traditional Chinese societies. Before a discussion of the traditional Chinese historical narrative, one fact needs to be mentioned. The term China (Zhong-Guo) has a history of less than one hundred years. The Chinese nation, her identity as a political and multi-ethnic state in the modern sense was only defined after the last dynasty, Qing, collapsed in 1911.

Traditionally, “China” as a whole was understood as an empire ruled by one person or family, where the ruler extended a family metaphor to all his subjects. That is, the family metaphor was the primary frame in which the relations between the emperor and his subjects were understood. With the cyclical shift of dynasties, “China,” perceived as a territorial entity, was handed from one family to another. Terms, such as “rivers and mountains” and “(the area) under heaven” were used to denote the whole empire. Yet these terms conveyed a sense of territoriality, rather than the peoples living on this territory. This sense of territoriality was a political theme mentioned by early nationalists at the early stages of nationalist revolution. In mobilizing people to overthrow the Qing dynasty the nationalists urged them to “drive out the Manchurians and restore the Chinese nation.” In this slogan, the Chinese nation was conceived as a territorial entity and the Manchurians were still perceived as alien ruling class. Disappearance of the slogan in later period of the revolution presumably shows that the nationalists realized that the Manchurians had become an integral part of the Chinese society after over 260 years of cultural assimilation.

The Chinese have been avid historians. Each dynasty had its own official history documented by court historians. Alternative versions of history were written by scholars not attached to the emperor's court, yielding different interpretations of the same historical period. Articles and less voluminous historical books were written with regard to specific historical situations. Historians were commonly inspired to rewrite episodes of history when similarities among historical situations were inferred. In a sense, Chinese history books provide chronologies of historical events and episodic narratives, characterized as having occurred in perceived similar situations. Considering the many dynasties that China had gone through and patterns among dynasty shifts, historians would not have much trouble recognizing "similarities" among historical periods.

In his *The Content of the Form White* (1987) distinguishes three types of historical narrative: annals, chronicles, and narrative history proper. Annals are simply lists of events, they narrate but do not narrativize, as White puts it. In other words, annals do not impose any causal structure to the sequence of events they recount. Both chronicles and historical narrative proper are structured around a central subject. They recount events that happened to a person, a group, a community, or a society. However, a chronicle does not "conclude as simply terminate; typically it lacks, ... that summing up of the 'meaning' of the chain of events with which it deals that we normally expect from the well-made story" (1987, p. 16). Historical narrative proper or complete historical narrative, as it is sometimes called, is unified in the "meaning" that is the very structure of the events, an underlying cause. It should be noted that White does not see annals and chronicles as imperfect or primitive forms of history. For White, they are just particular products of cultural conceptions of history.

With White's scheme it can be observed that the traditional Chinese historical narratives are of the first two types. Although some historians and literary analysts argue that traditional Chinese historical writings reflect a belief in dynamic cycles—an ancient belief shown in Chinese classics such as I'Ching (Chang 1990), —this theory of dynamic cycle is in fact of a mysterious nature and was not understood as the ultimate cause of historical events. Historical writings tend to focus on empirical evidence and particular situations in which events occurred to render sequence of events coherent in a specific period of time. The mysterious force behind events is attributed to “nature,” “Tao,” “heaven,” “fate.” The force behind occurrences is essentially fluid, unpredictable, and amorphous, and was oftentimes “manipulated” by historical characters to make things happen. In a sense this natural force could be provoked and appeased. Natural phenomena such as earthquakes, droughts, flood, and eclipse were consistently used as signs of dynasty shifts. Most importantly, this force was understood as responsive to human acts, especially the emperor's behavior, instead of the other way around. Thus the duration of a dynasty is normally explained by the numbers of benevolent emperors and their lifestyles. Furthermore, this natural force normally serves as a value system one can appeal to rather than the ultimate agency of human events.

Communist ideology reverses this logic. History is naturalized as relentless and ineluctable laws that govern a forward movement. For the first time a single cause is imposed on the Chinese history. More importantly, according to communist ideology history has an end and follows a linear trajectory; whereas, the traditional Chinese view conceives history as an endless alteration of normal and abnormal states. Consequently these two views differ in ways in which historical periods are established. In the traditional view, a normal period occurred when a new dynasty was established and consolidated and the “natural” order was

restored. This “normal” period was interrupted as the empire deteriorated and was ready for replacement. Despite the dynastic alteration, the fundamental social relations, i.e. kinship, did not change. However, communist ideology conceives historical periods or phases as marked by social forms such as feudalism and capitalism. Nothing is normal or abnormal and everything is dictated by historical laws. Social relations thus conceived change from one historical phase to another.

Despite voluminous historical studies, no grand narrative exists in traditional Chinese historical writing. Traditional Chinese narrative is episodic. In records of three thousand or more years of Chinese recorded history, historical events enter into discourse as localized episodes whose intelligibility is ensured by social relations and cultural norms and values. Thus the invocation of a historical episode comes into the process of communication by virtue of its similarity to a current event in question in terms of the social relations among the characters (actors) and the moral lesson(s) to be drawn from the historical event. In other words, the Chinese traditional historical discourse is characteristic of situated events. This type of discourse does not claim any transcendental truth or law. Thus, the operation of storying or emplotting historical events is one of identification or recognition.

In contrast, the communist ideology provides a unified history. Unification or totalization is achieved through a pre-established scheme of historical development. Events come into discourse by virtue of their consistency with the scheme, and they obtain their truth-value through the scheme. The operation of emplotting historical events is one of indication or “marking” rather than recognition.

In a comment on Simmel and his contribution to the study of culture, Bauman (1999) points out that Simmel’s assessment of aristocracy and its ideals is that the two (i.e. social

positions and culture) are mutually self-sustaining. That is, the existence of an aristocracy depends on its perpetual reproduction of an aristocratic-type of stratum and aristocratic-type of cultural principles. Likewise, the Chinese communist regime is established through its creation of a social structure that adheres to a logic that is in turn confirmed by the behaviors of which the structure is comprised. In a phrase, the logic of communist ideology is constitutive. The Chinese communist regime's dependence on this logic "forces" the regime to select policies from among a set of alternatives that perpetuates its structure. The sustenance of this structure further requires that the system perpetually produce and reproduce actions and discourse that are intelligible in accordance with the system.

CHAPTER 5

STRUGGLE WITHIN THE SELF: PERSONAL STORIES

In this chapter I shall explore the structures of personal (i.e. autobiographical) stories sampled from People's Daily published from July to December, 1974. Using models of narrative modes, narrative genre, and narrative modalities I intend to examine the ways in which subjects are constituted in the communist ideological system. The analysis shows that 10 of the 26 sampled stories are of the genre of synecdochical comedy. This type of stories is centered on a "sought-for-person" whose identity is initially ambiguous. 8 stories are identified as melodrama, the subject of which is a "hero" who overcomes obstacles to accomplish a mission. Another 8 stories are identified as of mixed genres, which put "the new society" in contrast to "the old society." This type of story makes claims of an in-group identity. In the following section I use three stories to illustrate the three types. The stories are not represented in translation. Instead, I provide outlines of the events in the stories without my interpretation.

The First Story: Synecdochical Comedy and Return to the Center

This story is chosen because it almost epitomizes the genre of synecdochical comedy and representative of more than one third of the sampled stories. This genre normally has a flawed subject, a non-hero or a sought-for person who takes the contrary position in the model of narrative modes. Because of his/her flaw, he/she is unable to mount a fight against the opponent. It is the helper, a complement to the hero, who is in direct opposition to the opponent. Note that in this case the focal point of the story is the sought-for person or object.

The hero is in contrariety to the sought-for-object. The helper (not necessarily a person) usually plays a crucial role in the eventual restoration of harmony. The opponent is not as villainous as he/she is in a melodrama and less powerful than in a tragedy. In many cases, the opponent is simply the flaw of the hero, for instance, his arrogance, stupidity, or ignorance. The first story is outlined as follows:

Jiang, female, a high school graduate considered as one of the knowledgeable (educated) youth was recommended by poor-and-lower-middle peasants to work as a teacher at the village elementary school. Born and raised in a poor-and-lower-middle peasant family, Jiang thought that she had a "straight root" (meaning she was originally from a poor peasant family), and had grown into a "red seedling." She firmly believed that she would be good teacher. Before she started her career as a teacher, a session was held for her appointment when the peasant representative at the school administration had a conversation with her, exhorting her to be a good teacher who served the poor and lower middle peasants.

She was assigned to teach a "chaotic" class, and her trouble came immediately. One of the students was disobedient and habitually skipped classes. Jiang had him stand in front of the whole class and scolded him and had other students criticize him. The parents of the pupil were very unhappy with the way she treated their son, and accused her of bullying their child and brought up the issue to the school administration. The peasant representative at the school had a talk to Jiang and pointed out to her that good intentions are not sufficient for a good teacher. Her way of handling the pupil was not a problem of method but a problem of "line". He further pointed out that Jiang was educated when the revisionist line had control

over education and her way of treating her pupils was no different from ways in which she was treated under the revisionist education system.

Jiang then realized that her assumption was wrong about herself being of “red root and straightly grown,” and having an inborn immunity to the revisionist influences. She then changed her attitude and methods to find that she and the pupil got closer. She then repeated her mistake in a similar situation. Only this time a different pupil made trouble during classes. When the peasant representative talked to her she exculpated her by attributing the mistake as caused by her quick-temper. The representative was less polite this time. He pointed out that it was not a problem of temper but a problem of emotional closeness (to the peasants). He then asked whether she had made up her mind on whether she wants to serve the poor peasants.

Jiang then had a chance to talk to the mother of the pupil who recalled the miserable life in the “old society” (before 1949) when her family members could not afford to go to school. The mother then entrusted her child to Jiang and hope that she would educate him well.

Jiang then was ashamed of herself. And realized she hadn’t always followed Mao’s revolutionary line and had let the poor peasants down. She then studied Mao’s teachings and realized the influences from the revisionist educational line would not fade away automatically. One has to fight them, sometimes painstakingly.

(People’s Daily, July 17th, 1974)

This story has three events recounted, two of which were centered on some trouble-making students in Jiang’s class. The first event is a ritual of entrusting or what Propp (1968 [1928]) refers to as making contract. In this event, only two external actants appear: the

sender and the receiver, and the event takes place on the communication axis. The sender, the peasant representative, entrusts a mission to the receiver, Jiang. Although tension is suggested in the exhortation session, it does not manifest as conflict. The sender was not without doubt about the receiver's "competence" to accomplish the mission. This tension allows the sender to be syncretized with the helper to appear in the later events.

The second event recounts a series of instances including the deeds of the trouble-making student and the parents' accusation. With the three syncretized as the opponent, the function of the opponent is only to expose the flaw of the subject. Moreover, Jiang does not even know what her problem is. What is sought for is not clear for her. It was until the reappearance of the peasant representative and the message he brings, she realized that the resolution of the conflict between her and the opponents depends on what is sought for, namely, a new self free of the evil influence of the old system.

The third event is similar to the second. However, it differs from the second in that the only opponent is the student, and the student's mother appears in the event as a sender/helper. The peasant representative again appears as a syncretized sender/helper. Only this time he is more solemn in his manner. The tension is finally resolved when our hero realized the root of the problem and carries on her mission in a more determined manner.

Based on this analysis, the actantial role are identified as follows:

- Subject (sought-for person): Jiang under the influence of the revisionist education
- Opponent: naughty pupils and the parents of the first pupil
- Hero: Jiang's willing
- Helper: Peasant representative

The actantial structure of this story is represented in Figure 5.1. Characteristic of the synecdochical comedic stories from People's Daily is the split of one character into two actantial roles: the hero and the sought-for-person. Note in this model, the actantial roles of "hero" and "sought-for-person" are one character, Jiang. The above-mentioned split creates two oppositional positions signified respectively by Jiang's willingness to change and her flaw. These two positions allow for self-identification to occur.

In a synecdochical narrative mode the hero's power is usually almost equal to her opponent. She/he is not able to resolve the conflict between her/him and the opponent(s). In this mode, the helper is usually the wisest or most powerful. Thus our hero in this story is entangled in a set of relations where she is not in a position to settle the dispute. This less advantageous position is obviously due to her estrangement from the group. The parents of both students, though one student's parents appear as opponent and the other's mother appears as sender, belong to the group since they are all poor peasants.

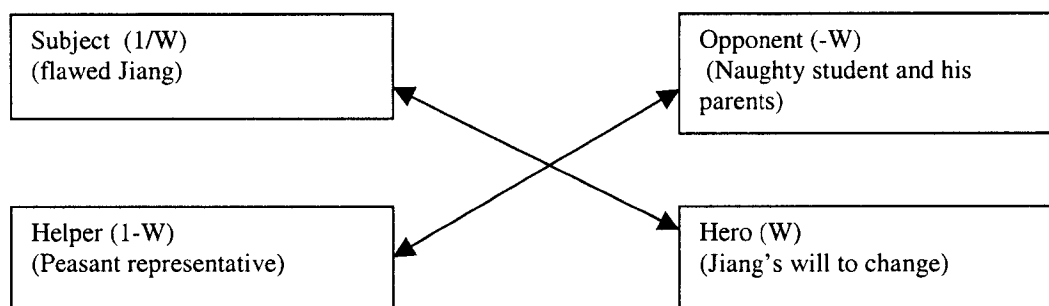


Figure 5.1 Actantial Model of the First Story

This actantial analysis reveals the structure of social relations in which the subject of the story is positioned. The poor and lower peasants occupy the center of the social system and thus appear as either helpers or opponents. At the center one can never be wrong. For

instance, our narrator never judges whether the accusation from the parents of the first student is right or wrong. Instead, the problem is always identified as residing in the subject, who has alienated herself from the center because of her education. The interactions between the subject and the peasant representative take the form of communication initiated by the syncretized sender/helper. The resolution of the conflict between the hero and her opponents depends on the hero's awareness of what is sought for, the object. It is only through her embrace of the object that the conflict is resolved and harmony within the group is restored.

All events unfold along the axis of communication. It can be seen that the two crucial moments in this story are moments of marking (see chapter 2). The one who marks or indicates is the peasant representative who is from the center. Jiang's difficult situations are never read as a problem of operation or method and are always interpreted as caused by her estrangement from the poor peasants. The only conflictual event (i.e. when Jiang refuses to recognize what she is accused of) takes the form of communication. Accusation is a form of marking or indicating. In this case Jiang's refusal to recognize terminates the communication. Instead of devising a way to make further communication possible, the peasant representative makes another "marking." Since this time the message is from a more powerful person, an authority, Jiang recognizes her "lack" of affective closeness to the poor peasants. The tension is thus settled through this complete communicative act.

From the narrator's perspective this story relates a process of identification. This seems to be a distinctive feature of the reformist synecdochical comedy: the distance between the hero and the sought-for-object creates a tension within a single subjectivity. As Ricoeur (1992) suggests, identification is always identification with an "other." The space between the self and the "other" allows for the process of identification, a discursive action. In this

story, Jiang embodies the “bad” effect of the old system and a will to purify her self of the evil influence. This turns out to be the “project” of this story since the eventual resolution of the tensions between Jiang and the poor peasants is determined by Jiang’s “realization” of her “lack.” As Greimas (1984[1966]) suggests that the project axis entails a “will” or “desire.” Jiang’s “will” bridges the old subject and the one she struggles to identify with. This narrative strategy splits a person into two opposing identities, the contradiction between which requires complete disappearance of one to establish harmony. As a subject of the ideological system, Jiang had to deny part of herself (namely, her 12-year education in the old system) in order to be fully accepted by the group, namely the poor-and-lower-middle peasants.

The distance between the “old” and “new” self is not recognized by Jiang herself. Instead, she first “mistakes” her way of treating the child for a problem of method and insists that she did what she did out of good intentions. In the relational knowledge frame, however, interactants adhere to a semantic domain and a “grammar” in which the situation and new phenomenon are rendered comprehensible. In this domain, the resolution of the conflictual situation does not depend on a procedure but on an understanding that is determined by a pre-existing sign system.

The narrative tension in this type of story is usually between an “actual world” that is polluted by traces of the old system, such as education and a “right world” that is imposed by the ideological system. In Ryan’s (1984) terms, the conflict in this type of story is between one character’s actual world and another character’s right world. The story usually proceeds from the actual world to the recognition of the right world and to the eventual abandonment

of the actual world. The “right world” always triumphs over the actual one and the story ends with a complete rejection of the actual world by the narrator.

Accordingly, it is within a discursive domain that an individual with a marginalized identity experiences a process of identification. The initiator is usually an authority figure from the center of the group whose identity is clear and stable. Through “marking” she/he exposes a “lack” in the individual who normally recognizes it. Thus the identification process is of the type of marking-recognition. It is worth noting that during the identification process a sign system is held constant. The function of the sign system is to “suture” (Hall 1996) a subjectivity with elements of a sign system.

The Second Story: Melodrama and Enhancing the Spirit of Struggle

The first story is centered on an individual whose identity as an insider was put into question. Through a series of events the individual comes to the realization that the root cause of her alienation from the group, the poor and middle lower peasants, is within her. It is this realization or awakening that brings her back to the center of the group. The second story, however, is told by an individual whose identity is never questionable. It is his tenacity in adhering to his identity that is strengthened through the narrated experiences. The outline of the story is outlined as follows:

Jiang was the (communist) party secretary of his production brigade (usually a village) who was entrusted this position during Cultural Revolution. In his work, he demonstrated a strong determination to struggle against everything that was wrong, and thereby offended some people. As he started to have doubts about what he was doing, he was faced with another challenge.

Since the party branch decided to organize the craftsmen in the brigade to serve the community, Jiang needed to persuade some of them to join the project. His second brother, a carpenter, refused. After an intense argument with his brother, Jiang gave up and the project was aborted. Since this event, Jiang tried to avoid confrontations with other people.

Then the movement of Criticizing Lin Biao and Confucius¹ started. Jiang was criticized by other members of the party branch and by some poor peasants. He then repeatedly studied Chairman Mao's teaching that "The philosophy of the communist is one of struggle" and came to the realization that struggle was a lifetime process. With strengthened spirit, he made a self-criticism to other members of the party branch and volunteered to finish the aborted project.

Trying to persuade his brother to join the project, Jiang had three conversations with him and organized a session of "remembering bitterness and appreciating sweetness"². These sessions brought his brother to tears. In a study session for all craftsmen in the village, his brother was the first to stand up to criticize Lin Biao and Confucius. With his brother as a role model, the craftsmen were soon organized.

(People's Daily, July 2nd, 1974)

¹ This movement started in 1973, almost two years after Lin Biao, who used to be the second most powerful figure in the communist regime, fled China and died in a plane crash on his way to Soviet Union. Since Lin Biao was allegedly a lover of Confucian classics, this movement was named after him and Confucius. This movement was less violent compared with preceding periods of Cultural Revolution. One theme of this movement was to "criticize" Confucius's doctrine of the golden mean that advocated a middle course of personal behavior, avoidance of confrontation, and moderation.

² This was a form of study session invented by the communists during the Land Reform in late 1940's and early 1950's as a strategy to mobilize peasants. "Bitterness" refers to the miserable life of the old society and "sweetness" refers to the happy life in the socialist society.

This story starts with Jiang's self-introduction. The fact that he was assigned to the position of party secretary seven years after the beginning of the Cultural Revolution gave him an unquestionable identity as an "insider." He was at the very center of the group of poor peasants—always an unambiguous identity in the categorization schemes discussed in chapter 4. Moreover, Jiang depicted himself as the initiator of actions, a requirement of someone of his identity. Thus in our analytic scheme, Jiang was the hero, though not without his moments of weakness. Other members of the party branch were presented in the story as helpers who appeared at crucial points to provide assistance. In one specific event narrated here, his brother assumed the role of opponent. As a carpenter, his brother's identity was a marginalized one. Like property and knowledge/education, skills also alienate one from the center. This alienation was implied in the story through the craftsmen's reluctance to be part of Jiang's project. Furthermore, the "object" of the story was the project of organizing the craftsmen to serve the community. Therefore, the actantial roles are identified as follows and the model of narrative mode is presented in Figure 5.2.

- Hero: Jiang
- Project: Organization of craftsmen
- Opponent: Brother
- Helper: other members of the village party branch

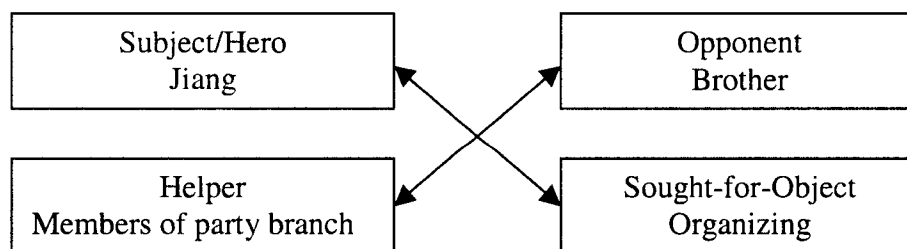


Figure 5.2: Actantial Model of the Second Story

This is a story about a hero who overcomes obstacles to accomplish a mission or task with the help of his allies. The only chance his opponent has is the temporary weakness of the hero. With the helper syncretized with the sender (i.e. other members of the party branch), the tenacity of our hero is enhanced after the messages (i.e. criticism from other branch members and the themes of the movement) are received, and his opponent has to give in. The narrative mode appears to be heroic. The social relation reflected in this mode is primarily the power differential between the hero and his opponent. Although the opponent is not depicted as a villain, he not only confronts the hero directly but also exposes the weakness of the hero. Again, similar to the first story, the events unfold mostly along the communication axis. Even the confrontation between the hero and his opponent takes a communicative form, namely argument. Argument is one possible outcome of a particular form of the inquiry-answer type of communicative act (see chapter 2). In this form of communication, the inquiry is a request. If the request is refused, then the proposed “contract” does not materialize.

It is noteworthy that our hero gave up his effort after the argument. Here a Chinese traditional cultural rule is invoked. Jiang, though the secretary of the party branch in the village, was still seen as a member of the Jiang family. His personal identity is closely intertwined with his brother's and other family members'. In this discourse, he was at a disadvantage since his opponent is his older brother, someone whose authority he ought to defer. The situation in which the conversation occurred was between brothers. In other words, his “conversation” with his brother took place in a family setting, rendering our hero powerless. For other villagers, especially the reluctant craftsmen, his brother's refusal gave them enough leverage not to be part of the project. The narrative tension is between two model worlds (Ryan 1985): the obligation-world of the traditional Chinese family values and

the right-world that is advocated by the communist ideological system. Moreover, the “hero” is in a weak position at the interface of two cultures.

Then the movement of Criticizing Lin Biao and Confucius provided a more powerful authority in accordance with which the standstill between Jiang and his brother could be broken. Note that this movement was one that directly confronted some traditional cultural rules, especially those governing interpersonal interactions, with a discourse on struggle emanating from the center of the communist ideological system. Armed with this new discourse and with the help of other members of the party branch, the hero was able to confront his brother again. This time our hero constructed formal and serious situations and brought his brother into study sessions where traditional values were rebuked. Thus the eventual victory of our hero is the victory of the movement, the victory of the ideological system over traditional values.

In this story the identity of the hero is not influenced. Instead, the efficacy of his fixed identity is strengthened. Different from the first story, the identity of the hero in this story is never problematic. It is his “will” to struggle that is enhanced through provision of a new discourse from the ideological system. The narrator utilizes the grand narrative of struggle to organize his experiences by opposing two discursive systems head to head. “Struggle” in this story (like in many such stories) is not a physical conflict but a clash between two cultural systems. The purpose of the struggle is reformation of others’ subjectivities. The success of this struggle is shown by the brother’s complete willingness to be a role model for other craftsmen. Recall that in the first story, it was the “hero’s” subjectivity that was reformed, not others’.

The Third Story: Suffering and Salvation

During the first 30 years of the Chinese communist regime, “remembering bitterness and appreciating sweetness” served as a protocol of narrative that was used to highlight the differences between the “old society” and the “new society.” Typical of this type of narrative, the narrator (subject) takes the actantial role of the “sought-for-object.” Thus, the narrative mode of this type of story is similar to the first case: synecdochical comedy. However, the events in this type of story unfold mainly along the project axis instead of the communication axis (see chapter 2), which does not narrate a process of reforming one’s identity but implies a claim of one’s identity as a member of the central groups. Moreover, this type of story usually contains a “tragedy” that is briefly narrated in contrast to the comedy the narrator experienced in the “new society”. This “tragedy,” however, does not show features of Greimasian tragic narrative mode. Instead, the events are narrated in an ironic mode in which the hero is defeated and thus certain cultural values are brought into question. As discussed in chapter 3, this narrative mode conveys a sense of meaninglessness. In the reformist frame this narrative is only enacted to depict the irrationality of the “other.” The following is an outline of such a story.

Zhang was struck by a strange disease in the winter of 1973 and lost his ability to walk and talk. A barefoot doctor³ of his commune started to pay regular visit to him no matter how severe the weather was. He also encouraged him to struggle against the illness. Nine month in a row the doctor never missed his visits and took care of the

³ “Barefoot doctors” was a medical system installed during the Cultural Revolution as an effort to reform the old medical system that had been “dominated by the revisionists and bourgeoisie”. Young people of “good elements” were selected and briefly trained as doctors. This system soon disappeared after Mao’s death because of its ineffectiveness and many disasters it had caused.

patient as if he were his son. Finally his illness was cured and he proclaimed this a victory of Chairman Mao's proletariat medical line.

When Zhang was child, his father was very ill. The eleven-year-old Zhang was asked to go 20 miles to invite a doctor. Without money to hire a horse-drawn wagon, the doctor refused to come. The father died without "a grain of medicine."

Thinking about the suffering in the old society and the sweetness of the new, Zhang is determined to whole-heartedly support the new system.

(People's Daily July 28th, 1974)

This simple story has two parts, a comedy and an irony. The following actantial roles are identified and the models narrative modes are shown in Figures 3.5a and 3.5b.

Part 1:

- Hero: Barefoot doctor
- Sought-for-person: Zhang the patient
- Opponent: illness
- Helper: Absent

Part 2:

- Hero: Absent
- Sought-for-person: Zhang's father
- Opponent: illness and the doctor
- Helper: 11-year-old Zhang

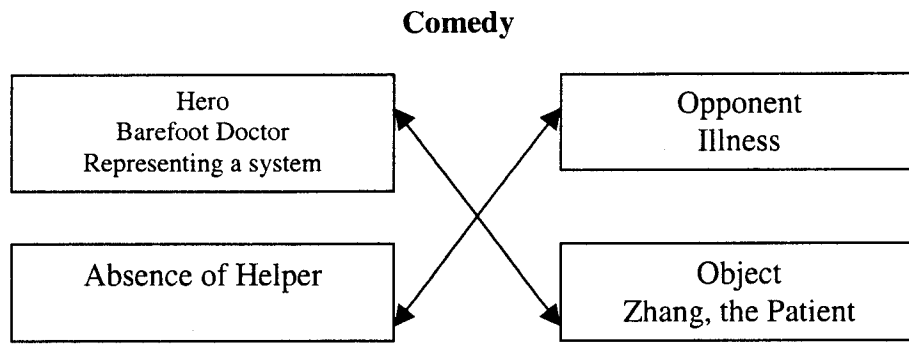


Figure 5.3a: First Actantial Model of the Third Story

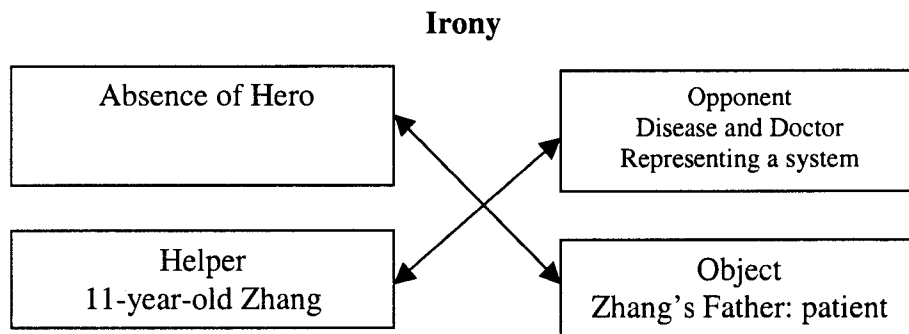


Figure 5.3b: Second Actantial Model of the Third Story

Both stories are narrated by Zhang who is the “object-sought-for” in one story and the “helper” in the other. As subjects of both stories, two different actantial roles establish two different narrative modes: comedic and ironic. One highlighted contrast in these two models is the presence of a “hero” in one and the absence of a “hero” in the other. The salvation of the object depends totally on the presence of a hero. One external actantial role is invoked in the first story, the sender, by depicting the barefoot doctor as sent by the new system. This fusion of the sender and the sent occurs in most such stories. This narrative strategy regulates the reading of the “sent person.” In particular, the “sent person” is thus read as a sign—a representative of a system. His benevolence is attributed to the system instead of being understood as an individual quality.

Another contrasting point is the actantial role of opponent. In both stories the illnesses are opponents. However, in the second story, the doctor's refusal places him in direct contradiction to the helper and thus syncretizes him with the illness as the opponent. The fusion of the father's illness and the anonymous doctor as the opponent highlights an irony of the "old society." This fused actantial role is again depicted as representing a system, the old society. Consequently the irrationality and absurdity of the old system is exposed.

It should be noted that on the surface, this type of story does not narrate a process of one's struggle with one's identity as the first two stories do. In fact, this type of story contains a claim of an identity as a central member of the system because whoever suffered in the old system falls into the "revolutionary" categories by default. However, this logic works the other way around. Whoever is a member of the "revolutionary" categories must have suffered in the old society. This is why in mass movement the identities of those with knowledge, skill, and property are more ambiguous than those without them. The logic here is that with such resources at their disposal, such people probably suffered less leaving them more attached to the old system.

It is also noteworthy that the subjects in this type of story are powerless and they are never heroes in the actantial model. Their eventual salvation is determined by the arrival of the hero, a representative of the communist system. This type of narrative provides a this-worldly soteriology according to which salvation is attained.

Therefore, narrating one's suffering in the old system and happy life in the new one is a format used to assert one's in-group identity. However, such narrating is mostly a privilege restricted to people with an unambiguous in-group identity. The credibility of one's narration depends to a large extent on the clarity of one's identity. Thus oftentimes the narrators find

themselves negotiating the tension between their presumed identities and the credibility that ascribed to their narration. At later stages of Cultural Revolution, the term “old system” sometimes referred to the first seventeen years of the communist regime, which was depicted as dominated by the revisionist-capitalist liners. This type of narrative was sometimes used to tell stories about one’s suffering in the revisionist system. However, relating such stories was a dangerous game because the temporal boundaries distinguishing old from new were never clear and always open to revision. In the sampled stories, there are a few such stories written by people whose identities were beyond question and their stories focused on certain sub-systems such as medical service and education. None targeted the communist system as a whole.

Discussion

Of all the twenty-six personal stories, 10 were identified as of the first type: characteristic of a synecdochical narrative mode and narrating experiences of one’s struggle with an estranged identity. The narrators in these stories are of two types: intellectuals, such as schoolteachers and scholars, and party officials, who had been in positions of authority in the “revisionist system.” The first group of people had to struggle with their identities through the first twenty-seven years of the communist regime. The identities of the people in the second group become problematic during the Cultural Revolution. In the stories written by members of both groups, their struggle with their obscured identities is uniformly assisted with help from people of central groups, such as poor peasants and workers and sometimes “the party.” Their actions are read and interpreted by other people who belong to the central groups. In each case, the author ends the story re-centered (i.e. in conformity with the communist ideological system).

Eight stories were identified as of the second type, namely melodrama. Heroes in these stories are invariably of the central categories such workers, poor peasants, People's Liberation Army (PLA) soldiers, and red guards. Different from the first type, not the heroes but their opponents vary from adherents of traditional values to people attached to old systems. However, an external sender-helper is not always necessary. Oftentimes, heroes come to realize on their own that they need to be stronger-willed and to exert more effort. In these stories it is by virtue of the hero's identity that she/he is able to take a position at the front of the "struggle."

The remaining eight stories were identified as the third type, and thus as having two stories—one in comedic mode and the other in ironic mode. The contrast between the experiences of the narrator in two different "worlds" renders one "meaningless" and the other meaningful. In fact, it is in this contrast that the "meaninglessness" of the old world is established, and that the meaningfulness of the new world is attained. Thus, in this sign system two categorically different worlds are distinguished so that each obtains meaning by virtue of its opposition to the other. The subjects in these stories are never agents in the sense of having the capacity to initiate actions. The stories' heroes are never specific individuals. As in the third story analyzed above, in which an individual hero is mentioned, she/he is just a nameless barefoot doctor that signifies the communist system. In a sense, this type of story is a direct translation from the grand narrative. And, the grand narrative acquires its specific referent through this type of narration.

CHAPTER 6

DETERMINATION AND TRANSFORMATION: ACTION AND EMOTION

In this chapter I examine how the ideological system constitutes the behavioral and emotional patterns of the masses. As discussed in chapter 1, neither action-orientations nor emotional patterns are understood as individual traits. Instead they both can be viewed as components of a model of personhood that was instituted by the ideological system through a structured discursive practice. In chapters 4 and 5 the fundamental semantic structure and the discursive strategies of identification are reconstructed from the textual data of narratives. In this chapter a sample of editorials is examined to test the hypotheses derived from an analytic theoretical model established based on Roberts' (2003) model of cultural frames, Ryan's model of modalities, and constructionist theoretical arguments discussed in chapter 2 and 3.

Variables and Descriptive Statistics

As discussed in Chapter 3, textual data are obtained from 281 editorials on four events. Components of sentences are coded into a categorical data matrix that contains the following variables.

1. Event type: variable with four values referring to the four events.
2. Modality of action: variable with four primary values referring to four types of modality corresponding to four cultural frames: "can," "should," "may," and "must." Note that the "may" modality is sub-categorized according to how strongly the action is

modalized. For instance, a “determination” is a stronger modalization than an “intention” or “want.” An “intention” is stronger than a “hope.”

3. Author type: a two-valued variable to characterize whether the author has a clear in-group or ambiguous identity. In-group identities include workers, soldiers, poor peasants, communist party members, red guards, and so on, while ambiguous identities include intellectuals, school teachers, actors, and democratic party members.

4. Actor type: a three-valued variable that captures the identity of the actor that is the subject of the modalized action. The three values of the variable stand for “we”, “they”, and actors of ambiguous identities.

5. Object type: a four-valued variable that captures aspects of the object of the modalized action. The four values respectively stand for material or immaterial aspects of “us” or “them”. For instance, if the action proposed is “to strengthen our will,” then “our will” is coded as an immaterial aspect of “us.”

6. Action types: a many-valued variable that characterizes types of action. Coding of this variable depends on the verb that describes the action.

7. Emotions: a many-valued variable that captures the types of emotions displayed in the texts.

8. Emotion transformation: a variable that characterizes the types of action or aspects of action discursively transformed from emotions exhibited in the texts.

9. State of being: some “actions” proposed in the sampled sentences are in fact ways of “being” instead of “doing”. Thus a variable is created to capture whether the modalized “being” will lead to a better or worse state and hence this is a two-valued variable.

With the above variables established, all the hypotheses proposed in chapter 3 can be tested. However, descriptive statistics calculated from some of the above variables inform the research too. Here I provide a brief discussion of these variables.

First, of the three actor types, 238 cases are of the “we” or “in-group” type. Only 24 cases propose actions to be taken by out-group actors and 19 by people of ambiguous identities. This evidence strongly suggests that subjectivity of the “enemy” is weakly perceived if perceived at all. The proposed actions with enemy or people of ambiguous identities as subjects are modalized as warnings and advice of “noting acting in certain way” or “stopping” certain action.

Second, a frequency table of author types shows that of the 281 editorials 204 were written by people of clear in-group identities and 68 were written by people of ambiguous identities (9 cases are unidentified). This evidence suggests that People’s Daily’s editorial policy is one that publishes editorials based on authors’ identities.

Third, 76 actions proposed in the editorials deal with between-group relations, i.e. the relations between “us” and “them.” These actions include “destroy,” “crush,” “combat,” “fight,” “criticize,” “struggle against”, and so on. 166 cases propose within-group actions, which include “strengthen,” “construct,” “raise,” support,” “follow,” “accomplish,” “reform,” and the like. 19 cases are actions imposed on people of ambiguous identities. These actions include “self-criticize,” “wake up,” “recognize,” “acknowledge,” and “choose.” The rest of the cases are either modalized states of “being” or actions to be taken by the enemy. These action types fall into three distinct semantic domains: actions against enemy, actions among “us,” and actions dealing with people of ambiguous identities. It should be noted that the first two sets can be understood as “rights” of “us”. The third set

usually presents two choices for people of ambiguous identities: either becoming one of us or becoming one of them.

Fourth, seven emotions are identified from the texts: anger, hatred, grief, disgust, happiness, excitement, and pride. In 104 cases no emotions are displayed. Of the seven emotions, anger with 62 cases, hatred with 18 cases, and grief with 79 cases are the most prominent emotions. The large number of grief displays is concentrated in the event of “Mao’s death. It can be observed that the prominent emotions are all ones that have external causes. This is not to argue that Chinese people under the communist regime did not have self-directed emotions such as shame, regret, and guiltiness. Instead, it should be noted that the communist ideology is a public discourse. On one hand, the presence of certain emotions serves to draw the boundary for this discourse. On the other hand, these emotions can be understood as part of the personhood the ideological system constitutes.

Finally, another feature of the ideological system concerns the objects of actions in these texts. 255 cases propose actions centered on transitive verbs. Of the 255 cases, 197 actions are directed towards non-material entities such as “capitalist road,” “revolutionary cause,” “Chairman Mao’s revolutionary line.” This feature suggests that individuals participating in the ideological practice tend not to propose concrete actions—actions that have specific targets. It is safe to play the game within the sign system unless the object of an action is clearly defined (e.g. individuals clearly defined as enemies). In the following section I test the hypotheses proposed in Chapter 3.

Hypothesis Testing and Findings

In this section I present the results of hypotheses testing and discuss the implications of findings. Seven variables are needed to test all the hypotheses proposed in chapter 3.

Hypothesis 1: *Actions in the Chinese communist ideology are primarily modalized in terms of rights.*

Suppose that the four possible modalities are equally distributed in the population of texts, one would expect that the sample contains approximately equal proportions of the four types of modalization, i.e. $\frac{1}{4}$ for each modality. Thus to test hypothesis 1 is to test whether or not the proportion of the actions modalized in terms of right is significantly larger than $\frac{1}{4}$. To do the testing, “modality of action” is recoded into a binary variable that has two values: the “right” modality and “ability, obligation, and requirement” modalities. The proportion of “right modality” and its confidence interval are calculated.

Proportion of “right” modality: 95% (24 out of 281)

Confidence interval: [92.5%, 97.5%]

This confidence interval suggests that in the population of such texts, 92.5 to 97.5 percent of proposed actions are modalized in terms of rights. Since the lower limit of this confidence interval is much larger than 0.25, the hypothesis is supported.

Hypothesis 2: *Actions proposed during times of crisis (interruption of valued state or process) such as Mao’s death and the Sino-soviet war are more strongly modalized than actions proposed during the other two events (Interruption of unvalued state or process).*

This hypothesis is tested within the “right” modality and thus the sample size is reduced to 245. The modality variable is recoded into “strong modalization” that includes only “determinations,” and “less strong modalization” that contains the categories of “want,” “hope,” and “advise.” Furthermore, event type is recoded into a binary variable. The two values are “interruption of a valued state or process” and “interruption of unvalued state or process” with the former understood as “crisis.” In this case, the null hypothesis is that there

is no association between the two variables. This independence is tested using a Chi-squared statistics.

Table 6.1: Crosstabulation of Event Type and Modalization Strength*

		"Right" Modality		Total
		Strong modalization	Less Strong Modalization	
Crisis	Count	121	33	154
	Expected Count	103.1	50.9	
Non-crisis	Count	43	48	94
	Expected Count	60.9	30.1	
Total	Count	164	81	245

***Pearson Chi-Square: 25.352; df=1; p < 0.0005**

The value of chi-square and its significance level provide strong evidence to reject the independence hypothesis. The expected counts suggest that in times of crisis actions are more strongly modalized than in times of non-crisis. Thus hypothesis 3 is supported.

Hypothesis 3: People of stable in-group identities such as workers, poor peasants, and People's Liberation Army soldiers are more likely to use stronger modalization than people of other identities.

To test this hypothesis, "author type" and the recoded "modality type" are used. Since in 8 cases, the authors' identities cannot be identified, these 8 cases are excluded from the analysis. Similar to the test of hypothesis 3, the null hypothesis is a hypothesis of independence, i.e. there is not association between author's identity and modality strength. A similar test is conducted and the results are shown below.

An examination of the test statistics in Table 3.2, its significance level, and the expected counts shows that people of clear in-group identities are more likely to use strong modalization of actions such as "determination" while people of ambiguous or marginal identities tend to modalize actions less strongly.

Table 6.2: Crosstabulation of Author Types and Modality Strength*

		“Right” Modality		Total
		Strong modalization	Less Strong Modalization	
In-group Identity				183
	Count	134	49	
	Expected Count	124.3	58.7	
Ambiguous Identity				
	Count	27	27	54
	Expected Count	36.7	17.3	
Total	Count	161	76	237

***Pearson Chi-Square: 10.324; df=1; p=0.001**

Hypothesis 4: *Only negative emotions such as anger and hatred are discursively transformable into actions.*

No statistical test is needed to support this hypothesis since all transformable emotions are negative emotions. The three transformable emotions identified are anger, hatred, and grief. Of the 177 emotion displays in the texts, 71 cases propose emotion transformation: 51 cases of grief, 12 cases of hatred, and 8 cases of anger. However, only in two cases emotions are directly transformed into actions and in the other 175 cases emotions are transformed into “strength.”

Hypothesis 5: *People of stable in-group identities are more likely to propose transformable emotions than people of other identities.*

This hypothesis is tested using a similar approach and results are presented in Table 6.3. Again, the test statistics and expected counts suggest that people of clear in-group identities are more likely to display transformable emotions than people of other identities.

Table 6.3: Crosstabulation of Author Type and Emotion Transformation*

Author Type		Emotion Transformation		Total
		Transformable Emotion	Non-transformable Emotion	
Clear In-Group Identities				
	Count	58	125	183
	Expected Count	48.6	134.4	183
Ambiguous Identities				
	Count	5	49	54
	Expected Count	14.4	39.6	54
Total	Count	63	174	237

***Pearson Chi-Square: 10.753; df=1; p=0.001**

Hypothesis 6: *Actions associated with transformable emotions are more strongly modalized.*

This hypothesis is tested using two binary variables. The first is “emotion transformation” that has two values: transformable emotion and non-transformable emotion. The second is “strength of modalization.”

Table 6.4: Crosstabulation of Emotion Transformation and Modality Strength*

		“Right” Modality		Total
		Strong Modalization	Less Strong Modalization	
Transformable Emotion				
	Count	57	6	63
	Expected Count	42.2	20.8	63
Non-transformable Emotion				
	Count	107	75	182
	Expected Count	121.8	60.2	182
Total Count		164	81	245

***Pearson Chi-Square: 21.230; df =1; p < 0.0005**

Similar to the interpretation of hypotheses 3 and 4, the test statistics and expected counts in Table 6.4 show that authors who display transformable emotions are more likely to modalize actions strongly. Hypothesis 6 is supported.

Hypothesis 7: *Within-group actions are more strongly modalized than actions directed to enemies and people of ambiguous identities.*

To test this hypothesis, “action type” is recoded into a binary variable. The two values are respectively within-group actions and between-group actions.

Table 6.5: Crosstabulation of Action Type and Modality Strength*

	“Right” Modality		Total
	Strong modalization	Less Strong Modalization	
Action directed to non-group members			
Count	45	50	95
Expected Count	64.5	30.5	95
Action within the group			
Count	116	26	142
Expected Count	95.5	45.5	142
Total Count	161	76	237

***Pearson Chi-Square: 30.779; df =1; p < 0.0005**

Again, the test statistics and expected counts show that in-group actions are more strongly modalized than actions directed toward enemies and people of ambiguous identities. Hypothesis 7 is supported.

Discussion

Two sets of findings emerge from the analyses in the preceding section. The first set concerns how actions in response to an event are modalized and the second set has to do with regulated emotional displays and discursive transformation of certain emotions.

The findings about action modalization strongly suggest that the predominant modality in the ideological system is the “right” modality. That is to say, proposed actions are justified in terms of what is “right.” Within this modality, however, actions are differentially modalized in degree. In the above analysis, four factors are linked to this

variation. First, event type influences the strength of modalization. In times of crisis—when the in-group is attacked or threatened—actions proposed are more likely to be strongly modalized, i.e. modalized in terms of determination.

A second factor that affects strength of modalization is author type or author's identity. The above findings suggest that authors of clearly defined in-group identities tend to modalize actions strongly. On one hand, this strong modalization is an assertion of one's identity; and on the other, it is the centrality of one's identity that places her/him in a discursive position from which she/he has the "right" to make such calls.

The strength of modalization is also affected by a third factor: action types. The above findings show that in-group actions are more strongly modalized than action directed toward enemies and people of ambiguous identities. Because of the clear distinction between "us" and "them" in reformist frame, emphasizing the power of "them" is perceived as undermining the power of "us." In a sense, such ideological discourse promotes contempt of one's enemy, especially in times of crisis. The emphasis is then on in-group actions since the defeat of the enemy is presumed and what is crucial is in-group solidarity. Highlighting group boundaries and reassuring group members' compliance is of primary importance in situations of group conflicts.

This argument is also supported by "explanations" provided in the government pronouncements published in People's Daily on events like the Sino-Soviet war and anti-rightist movement. In these pronouncements the Soviets were depicted as desperate and irrational. Their "invasion" into Chinese territory was presented as an attempt to redirect their internal failure externally. Thus, "our" unity and success proved that "Chairman Mao's revolutionary line" is right. Further strengthening our unity and continuing the right line

would guarantee our victory. In the pronouncements on the anti-rightist movement, the bourgeois rightists were depicted as a minute minority of the population. They were doomed to being defeated. Our victory is assured by our ability to recognize their disguised attack and strategies of deception. In both cases, the emphasis was on in-group actions.

Still another factor that affects the strength of modalization is emotion. Emotional display is usually a sign of the extent to which one's self is involved in a situation and one's commitment to an action. Merely cognizing an event creates distance from the situation. The emotional displays in the ideological practice can thus be understood as the subjects' response to the call of the ideological system, acts of self-identification, and displays of the depth of one's involvement.

Furthermore, the association between emotion-transformation and intensity of action-modalization can also be understood as a feature of the ideological discourse. In most cases the transformable emotions such as anger, hatred, and grief are not directly transformed into actions. Instead, they are transformed into "strength" that further energizes action.

As discussed in chapter 2, Lyons proposes a discursive logic that transforms negative emotions into motive/intention and then action. In the editorials analyzed the discursive logic is to transform emotions into strength that further modalizes actions. In the light of the model of cultural frames, it can be argued that these two transformational logics are enacted by rules inherent in two cultural frames, namely individualistic and reformist frames. For the individualist a negative emotion is perceived as a problem to be dealt with and thus actions are needed to target the emotion itself. In the reformist frame, however, negative emotions are caused by external factors and thus actions are called for to deal with the external "causes." Furthermore, the essentialist perceives (positive or negative) emotional displays as

either appropriate or inappropriate. The appropriateness or inappropriateness is evaluated according to the identity of the individual who displays such emotions in a specific situation. Thus understanding emotional displays is of primary importance instead of taking action. The mutualist displays negative emotion to stop an ongoing action or non-action that causes discomfort to members of a community. Thus the discursive logic for emotion transformation is from one's emotion to other's awareness of the problem and then to other's action or stop of an action.

It can be further argued that within reformist frame negative emotions are predominantly other-directed such as anger and hatred. That is why these are the most prominent emotions identified in the editorials. The self-directed negative emotions such as frustration, guiltiness, and embarrassment are not identified in the texts.

In this chapter I examined action modalization and emotion patterns in the Chinese communist ideology. The features of action modalization are shown to be conditioned by the fundamental semantic structures associated with the grand narrative, especially, perception of events and social categorization strategies. Emotion display and transformation are shown to be governed by the cultural frame within which this ideology is founded. These social psychological elements are thus examined as textual production regulated by a dominant discourse instead of personal traits.

CHAPTER 7

CONCLUSIONS

In this research I have established an epistemological position from which ideologies can be studied without assuming a separation between ideas and reality. The notion of discursive practice suggests that reality is always conceived through a certain discourse. Instead of viewing ideas as reflections of reality, I view ideas as constitutive of reality. This position allows me to examine the ways in which ideological systems are sustained through producing their subjects and realities that are meaningful to the subjects.

Methodologically, I incorporated Greimas's (1977, 1966 [1984]) narrative theory and analytical models, and Ryan's (1985) model of narrative modality into sociological analysis of personal stories. In conjunction with Roberts's (2003) model of cultural frames, this deductive analytical procedure provides an alternative to conventional qualitative analysis that starts with data and infers theoretical arguments. This analytical procedure allows me to reconstruct the author-perceived world in terms of its social relations, cultural ways of settling conflicts, communication patterns, and sources of social conflicts. Moreover, since this procedure is established based on theories that address fundamental cultural forms, it should have great potential for analyzing stories written or told by members of other societies.

As a case study based on the epistemological position and theoretical and analytical models established I examined the Chinese communist ideological system as a culture. My new position allows totalitarianism to obtain its meaningfulness as a discursive domain that is produced within one of four possible fundamental cultural forms, i.e. reformist frame.

However, this is by no means to argue that reformist frame is equivalent to totalitarianism or that reformist frame produces totalitarianism. In fact, a cultural frame is a set of rules that regulate the production of meaning. It does not produce meanings on its own. Specific meanings are produced by concrete discursive practice. A culture is the totality of discursive practice that is regulated by one or more cultural frames in the same way in which mathematics is governed by logic. An ideological system is totalitarian in its claim of being the Truth for a people and in its demand for people to organize and understand their lives only in its terms.

In the Chinese communist ideological system, such a truth claim is made through establishing a grand narrative that imposes a single cause for historical events and generates strategies and schemes for social categorization. Unlike existing literature on grand narrative, in which the notion of grand narrative is used as a heuristic tool to hint at the underlying assumptions of social discourses covering a long historical period, I define grand narrative in terms of its mode of causality. This definition allows for establishing an analytical procedure to tackle textual data and reconstruct grand narratives.

The findings in chapters 4 and 5 support Tucker's (1973) argument that modern totalitarian societies are results of cultural transformations. However, this research contributes to this argument in that it provides the specific forms in which cultural transformation takes place. On one hand, the communist grand narrative replaces traditional Chinese historical discourse through state ideological apparatuses (Althusser 1984[1967]) such as media. On the other hand, the social categorization scheme required by the communist ideological system coexisted with traditional interpersonal relations and interactional norms. Members of the Chinese society oftentimes had to negotiate a position in

between two cultural domains. For instance, the personal stories often oppose an obligation-world to a right-world, suggesting the tension between the traditional and the ideological discursive domains.

This research also contributes to the study of modern totalitarian ideology in that it emphasizes the ways in which subjects to a totalitarian system are produced. Ideology is understood as a living and lived discourse instead of a static set of ideas. Personal stories are examined as self-identification processes, through which members of a society organize their life experiences in accordance with the narrative modes, genres, and narrative conflict provided by the ideological system.

Common to all three types story, the fundamental semantic structure established through the grand narrative is used to interpret one's life experiences and to achieve a sense of self. The narrative modes are dictated by the social categories established in the grand narrative. These narrative modes require that subjects recognize such grand narrative, while positioning themselves in the progressive social category. The grand narrative is then sustained through its "marking" or "indicating" and its subjects' recognition.

In chapter 6 I have shown that the Chinese communist ideological system orients its subjects toward actions predominantly in terms of right. This action-orientation is fundamentally different from that in traditional Chinese culture, which orients its subjects toward actions in terms of interpersonal obligations. Moreover, negative emotions in the Chinese communist ideological system such as anger and hatred are other-directed, which are oftentimes transformed into actions mediated by strength, whereas in traditional Chinese culture emotions are evaluated as appropriate or inappropriate according to one's social identity in a specific situation.

In conclusion, the communist system typically opposes traditional Chinese culture as the “other.” This finding is fundamentally inconsistent with the argument that modern totalitarian system emerges in societies such as China because their traditional cultures contain elements that are compatible to totalitarianism. Surely it would be far-fetched to argue that nonetheless by being used as the communist ideological system’s antithesis, traditional Chinese culture somehow contains elements “compatible” with the Chinese communist ideology. These findings also offer no support for arguments reviewed in chapter 1, according to which traditional cultures “perverts” either the emancipation or the modernization process and transforms them into totalitarianism.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

In the first place, I would like to thank Professor Carl W. Roberts who has been an inspiring, encouraging, and patient mentor in the last five years. I owe much of my academic growth to our weekly meetings that are only interrupted by out-of-town trips.

I also would like to thank Professor Terry Besser and Professor Cynthia Anderson for their unceasing support. Thanks also go to Professor Shumin Huang and Professor Betty Docratz for their many insightful comments and suggestions.

Last but not least, I owe considerable debt to my beloved wife, Dantong. Her everlasting love for and unshakable confidence in me have accompanied me throughout the entire process of completing this dissertation.